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Ethiopia – Äthiopien



# Editorial

Ethiopia is undergoing rapid development: the national government wants to move the nation's economy from one dominated by subsistence to one of industrial development with a middle-income perspective. The state is promoting large-scale, export-oriented farming and industries, often focusing on foreign investment, but is also supporting small and middle-sized enterprises. Late Prime Minister Meles Zenawi was committed to rapid modernisation and, with the concept of the "developmental state", claimed for state institutions a leading role in the economy of the country. Current national strategies focus on programmes for poverty reduction, health, education, and access to basic infrastructure.

In this issue of TRIALOG, we aim at showing present and past developments in Ethiopia. We look at potentials and challenges for a transformation in the interest of all, including those living under precarious conditions. Even though one issue of TRIALOG can in no way suffice to cover all the diverse aspects, we tried to address issues we think relevant for an understanding of the current Ethiopian situation.

The present development of Addis Ababa seems, roughly speaking, to be driven by five dynamics: 1- the government-initiated Integrated Housing Development Programme; 2- global capital investments in high-rise buildings with offices, hotels, malls and luxury housing in the city centre; 3- densification of traditional Kebele housing areas and the growth of informal settlements to a large extent driven by rural migrants and refugees who earn a subsistence living from small-scale production, trade and recycling of discarded materials; 4- large-scale state infrastructure projects like roads and public transport systems, often implemented by Chinese firms and financed with Chinese credit; and 5- international and local industrialisation investments in, for example, the textile industry.

The complex scenario in the country is expanded by the challenge of harmonising more than 80 ethnic groups, each with their own culture and way of life. This raises the question of what kind of "modernity" and/or "development" is wanted and/or needed in different parts of the country. How can the government, in cooperation with local people, find the appropriate ways to raise living standards in the whole of the country? And how can urban planners contribute to inclusive development?

In the first article, **Hans Harms** discusses the complex process of feudal state formation in Ethiopia as advanced in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century in contrast to European colonialism, which justifies the often mentioned exceptional position of the country and is also mirrored in the present state-led model of economic development. He raises the question whether Ethiopia will succeed in the future to forge a national vision of self-determined, sustainable, and inclusive development. **Laura von Puttkamer** and **Hans Harms** look at the planning history of Addis Ababa, which, with its overlapping planning legacies of the various government systems and the results of the unplanned developments, has formed the city's ground plan. All that is now quickly being transformed by high-rise towers and traffic systems, but what is being retained is the culture of traditional associations and neighbourhood networks that play an important role in the everyday life and the development of local neighbourhoods. **Sascha Delz** analyses the Integrated Housing Development Programme in Addis Ababa, which, realised by the city administration with support of the German development

cooperation, provided around 80,000 housing units between 2004 and 2010. He criticises two principles: the exclusive implementation of private ownership, which promotes social and spatial segregation, and the standardised housing blocks, which only in limited ways consider the traditional ways of life of the inhabitants. **Monika Wiebusch** explains how the decision for an exclusively private condominium ownership model came up, and looks at the challenges that arose with this new type of accommodation.

The reasonable attempt to form an Integrated Regional Development Plan for Addis Ababa and its surrounding towns in the Oromia Regional State, starting in 2012, resulted in a political failure by 2015. **Melaku Tanku** traces the resistance against the planning process – with all its cultural, political and institutional dimensions – and tries to identify wrong decisions and communication errors that should be avoided in the future. South Africa and Ethiopia were the first Sub-Saharan countries to develop housing policies in the last decades to address the needs of people living under precarious conditions.

**Beate Lohnert** critically analyses the different approaches of post-Apartheid South Africa and Ethiopia, problematising the "adequacy" criteria which, respectively, are interpreted very differently.

In 1994, for the first time the Ethiopian constitution defined regional states and thus required the establishment of new regional capitals. **Leake Tesfamariam** and **Monika Wiebusch** present the development process of Semera, the new capital of the Afar State, an artificial urban centre from the drawing board. **Nadine Appelhans** analyses the everyday urbanisation practices in four different local neighbourhoods in the middle-sized city of Bahir Dar, and recommends to not interpret them as running counter to state plans but, instead, to include them in the urban development strategies and to use their strengths: incremental construction patterns, diversity, temporary residence models, and the local production of knowledge. **Elke Beyer** and **Anke Hagemann** investigate some large textile-industry locations established in state-provided industrial parks in Addis Ababa and other cities. They analyse the integration of global production chains into the urban spatial context, asking which potentials, urban spatial effects, and conflicts result from the ambitious Ethiopian industrialisation programme.

**Johannes Schoeneberger** presents a programme for soil and water conservation in areas with subsistence agriculture in the densely settled highlands that brings, with relatively simple methods, good results and high local acceptance. In the last article, **Ingrid Hartmann** analyses the leasing of large agricultural areas for export production and procuring foreign exchange. She questions whether these strongly promoted foreign investments contribute to the improvement of the living conditions and food security of the country.

In 2018, after years of social and ethnic struggles, the new Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed, the first Oromo in this position, has dared a new political approach: he concluded a peace treaty with Eritrea, released political prisoners, and seems to have re-established freedom of press and speech. The future will show how Ethiopia – with a continually high population growth and severe ecological problems in urban and rural areas – will handle the challenges it faces; challenges that all ask for sustainable and culturally accepted solutions.

Hans Harms, Klaus Teschner, Monika Wiebusch

## Ethiopia – Äthiopien

Volume editors: Hans Harms, Klaus Teschner, Monika Wiebusch

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# Ethiopia – A Unique Country and a Specific Way to Development?

Hans Harms

## **Äthiopien, ein außergewöhnliches Land – mit einem eigenen Weg zur Entwicklung?**

*Unter vielen Gesichtspunkten ist Äthiopien außergewöhnlich: mit der über 2000 jährigen Geschichte seiner Königreiche im Norden, dem einstigen Abessinien; als lange vor Kerneuropa christianisiertes Land mit anderem Kalender und anderen Tageszeiten sowie mit seinem erfolgreichen Widerstand gegen die Kolonialmächte, insbesondere Italien, das 1896 von den Truppen Kaiser Meneliks II geschlagen wurde. Dieser hatte mit militärischen Eroberungen im Süden und Osten die heutigen Grenzen Äthiopiens definiert, die seither von Kolonialmächten und Völkerbund respektiert wurden. Die kurze Zeit der Besetzung durch das faschistische Italien (1935–1941) beschleunigte Urbanisierung und Infrastrukturausbau. Kaiser Haile Selassie (1930–1974) stellte nach der Befreiung im 2. Weltkrieg die feudale Staatsstruktur des Reichs wieder her, war aber auch bemüht, das Land zu modernisieren. Der Machtübernahme sozialistischer Militärs (Derg-Regierung) im Jahr 1974 folgte eine Landreform mit Nationalisierung und egalitärer Vergabe des Bodens. Nach langen Kämpfen kam 1991 die bis heute regierende „revolutionär-demokratische Volksfront“ EPRDF an die Macht. Eine neue Verfassung machte Äthiopien 1994 zum demokratischen Bundesstaat mit nach ethnischen Kriterien neu geschaffenen neun Regionalstaaten. Unter Premier Meles Zenawi (1995–2012) entstand ein Entwicklungsmodell, das im Widerspruch zum neoliberalen Mainstream von Weltbank und IWF dem Staat eine starke wirtschaftliche Rolle zuweist mit staatlicher Gesundheitsversorgung, umfangreichen Investitionen in Grundbildung und Hochschulen, staatlichen Wohnbauprogrammen, staatlichen Armutsbekämpfungsprogrammen, unterstützt durch externe Entwicklungsfinanzierung, sowie einem raschen Ausbau der Infrastruktur. Liegt hier die Basis für einen eigenen Entwicklungsweg, der auch die Forderungen der Jugend und der verschiedenen Minderheiten des Landes aufnehmen und berücksichtigen könnte?*

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The name Abyssinia refers to the historic Solomonid Christian kingdom, which today encompasses Eritrea and the Ethiopian regional states of Tigray, Amhara, Afar, Benishangul-Gumuz and the western part of Oromia.

Ethiopia is in many ways a unique country. Its partly mythical history goes back about 2000 years. As a continuously existing state, Ethiopia, formerly Abyssinia,<sup>1</sup> with its Orthodox Christian Church and a written culture, has existed longer than any European nation except Greece (Schmitt 2018: 13). During Ethiopia's long history, the centres of the different Ethiopian kingdoms were in the northern part of the national area, which was also the traditional base of the Orthodox Christian Church.

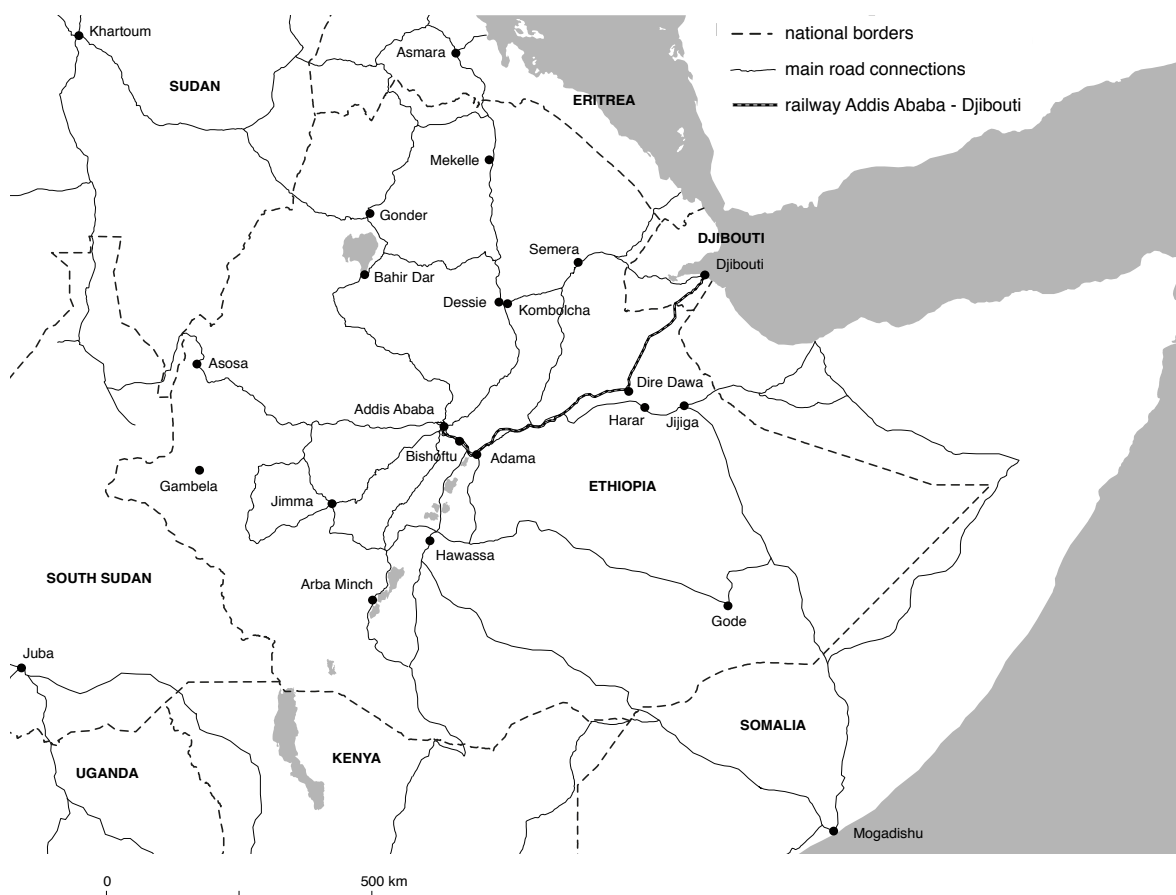
Ethiopia's geographic setting and its structural features are based on the dualism between the well-watered highlands and the dry lowlands. This determined, to a large extent, the traditional ways of agricultural or pastoral activities and the population's ways of life. In the highlands, the dominant traditional form of economy was sedentary/feudal/farming, and in the lowlands it was mobile/pastoral/mercantile. [Figure 1. See also page 11 of this issue of TRIALOG, Figure 8.]

"Ethiopia was an imperial nation until the overthrow of Haile Selassie in 1974, and operated under major themes of exceptionalism – Ethiopia of antiquity, with ruling parties claiming direct descent from the Queen of Sheba and King Solomon; Ethiopia, one of the earliest Christian nations; Ethiopia the modern nation that resisted European colonialism." (Wiley 2014: 3) This exceptionalism also finds expression in an own calendar (about seven years and eight months behind the Gregorian calendar, and with 13 months a year), and an own indication of day time (starting at 6 am with the hour *cero*).

## **The old kingdoms and the Empire**

The foundation of modern Ethiopia was laid in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century: started by the emperors Tewodros II and Yohannes IV, it was continued by Menelik II and Haile Selassie. Under the threat of European imperial ambitions and within the context of the "scramble for Africa" (the competitive fight of European nations to colonise parts of Africa), these leaders were able to organise resistance against invasions of their territory.

The complex process of state formation and urbanisation began with Emperor Menelik II, who started a process of imperial expansion. He "[...] extended greatly the boundaries of historic Abyssinia [...] into large areas of the south and east, and in so doing incorporated a myriad of religious, ethnic and linguistic groups into the Empire. To facilitate the control and administration of the newly conquered territories [...] between 1887 and 1910 at least 37 [...] [military] garrisons were established. In each garrison military governors were appointed who were supported by soldiers of the imperial army who in turn were accompanied by their families. Soldiers were rewarded for their services in expropriated land and according to rank were assigned a certain number of tenants from among the conquered people who were obliged to cultivate the land and to provide a range of other services." (Baker 1990: 212) Gradually the military garrisons became functionally more diversified and acquired new roles, "including civil administrations, judicial functions, markets, schools, transport, hotel and catering services. There is



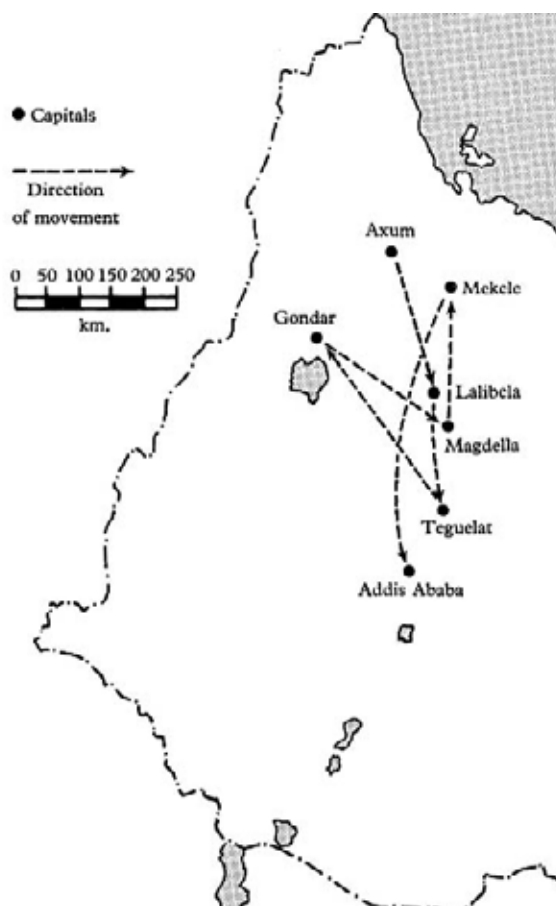
**Figure 1:** Map of Ethiopia with bordering countries. Source: map elaborated by Anke Hagemann, Elke Beyer and Rucha Kelkar, based on information on Google Maps, OpenStreetMap, and <africaopendata.org>

no doubt that these garrison towns created an enormous impetus for urban growth in those areas which, prior to the conquests, lacked an urban texture.” (Baker 1990: 212)

To pay for increasingly large imports of manufactured goods and also weapons to maintain a large and well-equipped army, Ethiopia became integrated into the world market. “It was necessary to increase exports (coffee, hides, spices, civet, ivory and gold) and this meant essentially extracting more of the rural surplus. Many southern towns, as an integral part of this rural extraction, grew through the expansion of their trade functions as points for the collection, bulking and distribution of rural produce for export.” (Baker 1990: 213)

“In the Amhara-Tigre heartland of traditional Abyssinia the process of urban development has had a long, although far from uninterrupted, history dating back to the rise of Axum in the fourth century A.D. At the risk of oversimplification, the history of Abyssinia until the nineteenth century was characterised by a lack of unity, internal warfare and foreign invasions, and this meant that conditions conducive to the growth of permanent urban centres were generally absent. As a result of relentless warfare throughout much of this long period Abyssinian capitals were often mobile and constructed with largely strategic considerations in mind and have been termed ‘wandering capitals’.” (Baker 1990: 213) [Figure 2]

increased. The Italians took over Eritrea and cut off Ethiopia from the Red Sea ports. They also took part of Somaliland, while the French claimed the port of Djibouti and the British claimed another part of Somaliland. Britain was



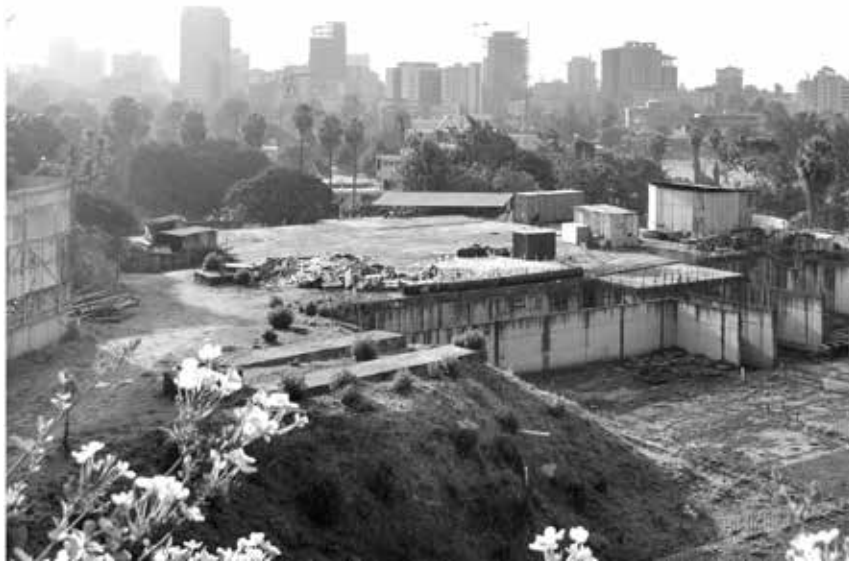
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### Successful resistance against European colonialism

With the opening of the Suez Canal in 1869, the Red Sea became a strategically important location for the European empires and pressure on the borders of Ethiopia

**Figure 2:** The wandering capitals of Ethiopia. Source: Horvath (1969), in: Wiley (2014: 3)



**Figure 3:** View over Addis Ababa, the flowering city.  
Source: Resilient Cities Program / GFDRR 2015

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approaching Ethiopia from Egypt and the Sudan and from their colony, Kenya, in the south.

The Italians invaded Ethiopia from Eritrea in 1895. They initially occupied much of the Northern Tigre area, but were later forced back. Emperor Menelik II was able to rally his people around the idea of a specific Ethiopian identity and the fact of the country's longstanding independence. About 100,000 Ethiopian troops from all parts of the country confronted the Italians with firearms and cannons and inflicted a decisive defeat on them. After the battle, the Italians abandoned their claim to a protectorate, the European powers acknowledged Ethiopia's independent status, and diplomatic missions were established by Italy, France, Britain and Russia (Last, Pankhurst, and Robson 1969: 47). In 1908, the new regions included in Menelik II's empire and the borders of present-day Ethiopia were confirmed by the international powers.

After Menelik II's death in 1913 and the short informal reign of Iyasu V, Empress Zewditu I, Iyasu V's aunt, took over (1916-1930). She appointed Ras Tafari Makonnen, Governor of Harar, as Vice Emperor and heir to the throne. In 1923, he applied for membership to the League of Nations and made Ethiopia the first African member. In 1930, after the death of Zewditu I, Ras Tafari Makonnen was crowned Emperor under the name of Haile Selassie I. He reigned until 1974, including the exile period of 1936-1941. He continued the consolidation of the Empire and the modernisation of Addis Ababa. He also tried to incorporate Eritrea again into Ethiopia. But this created conflicts, as many Eritreans were not willing to submit again to the imperial system. A longer war between the two countries followed.

Italy, under Mussolini, made a second attempt to conquer Ethiopia. They occupied the country from 1935 to 1941. The Italians prioritised road construction and the pace of urban development accelerated. They transformed the communication network, and by 1941 built a total of 7,000 kilometres of road. The occupation had a relevant impact on the spatial development of Ethiopian cities, especially Addis Ababa but also Gondar. Mussolini decided to redesign Addis Ababa into the "Capital of Italian East Africa". The guideline was obvious: the indigenous and Italian populations were to be sepa-

rated from one another. The plans aimed at the total spatial eradication of the former reign (Bodenschatz 2011: 381; see Harms and Puttkamer in this issue of TRIALOG, p. 8-19).

The occupation also had impacts on the urban-rural interface. Occupational groups such as blacksmiths, potters and other skilled artisans, who had till then resided and worked in dispersed rural homesteads, were encouraged to settle in towns. Rural, periodic markets were relocated to urban centres (Baker 1990: 214).

With the liberation in 1941 and the departure of a great number of Italians, urban development experienced a decline. "Gradually, with the return of trained administrators from abroad, an inflow of foreign assistance and the implementation of the First Highway Programme (1951-57), the process of decline was halted and reconstruction began. The political and bureaucratic apparatus of the imperial regime was restored. (Baker 1990: 215)"

The post-war reign of Haile Selassie I was characterised by efforts of modernising the country technically, while keeping the feudal system in place. He wanted to establish Ethiopia as the modern face of Africa, ordering modern constructions to impress his people and the world. Visible remains of this time are the Addis Ababa City Hall, positioned monumentally at the upper end of Churchill Road, as well as the Kennedy Library, the Hilton Hotel, and the Commercial Bank of Ethiopia (Knebel 2009: 8).

#### The Derg government and the land reform (1974-1991)

With the revolution in 1974 and the overthrow of Haile Selassie I, the feudal imperial system ended and a new period in the history of Ethiopia began. The radical land reform in rural and urban areas and the transformed ownership relations were the most important measures taken by the socialist Derg government (1974-1991).

Urbanisation started late in Ethiopia, and was focused on the capital since the foundation of Addis Ababa (see Harms and Puttkamer in this issue of TRIALOG, p. 8-19). [Figure 3]

In 1975, more than 90% of Ethiopia's population still lived in rural areas (UNDESA 2014). The rural land reform of the Derg government, with nationalisation and the distribution of agricultural land to small farmers, changed the demography of the country. On the one hand, rural-urban migration decreased in the first years of that land reform. On the other hand, as the law linked the land entitlement to "a family", the birth rate in rural areas strongly increased due to early marriages and the formation of a higher number of families. Ultimately, the lack of farmland for the increasing population fuelled rural-urban migration again. Rural-urban migration still continues today, but not only to Addis Ababa; other middle and small-sized urban centres also experience it.

Internal conflicts within the military government and external wars with neighbouring states led to a weakening of the Derg regime. Many different rebel forces fought against the Derg and against each other. The EPRDF (Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front) was founded in 1989 under the leadership of the TPLF (Tigray People's Liberation Front). It is a coalition of ethnically defined organisations.



## Federal Democratic Republic – the new constitution and the regionalisation of Ethiopia

The Derg were overthrown in 1991 by the EPRDF. The EPRDF formed a new government, committing itself to a fundamental reform set out in a new constitution. During the “transitional period” (1991–1995), that new constitution was elaborated. After a long and internationally moderated discussion about the benefits and drawbacks of a political decentralisation in a multi-ethnic country like Ethiopia, the constitution was agreed in 1994. The decentralisation on the basis of ethnic groups gave those groups far-reaching guaranteed rights. The new constitution formalised the division of the country into nine federated regional states delimited on the basis of settlement pattern, identity, language and the consent of the people concerned (see the article of Leake Tesfamariam and Monika Wiebusch in this issue of TRIALOG, p. 48–55).

Risks and possible developments like ethnic egotism, minority rights in the regional states, distribution of the federal budget and regional tax revenues were always topics of political discussion and dealt with in the laws. Obviously, not all wishes and expectations of the newly strengthened ethnic groups were fully resolved satisfactorily. But that can be seen as part of the matter of decentralisation.

## Beyond neoliberalism: the “Development State Project” of Meles Zenawi

In May 1995, the country’s first multiparty elections were held. EPRDF leader Meles Zenawi became Prime Minister. After the third (and genuinely contested) multiparty elections in May 2005, the EPRDF decided to restructure the infrastructure of the governing party on a massive scale and increase membership in all parts of the population. “As a consequence, the ruling party started to grow enormously and had, at 2013, five million members compared with about 700,000 before 2005.” (Lefort 2015: 365) A new governmental narrative of “renaissance” was introduced, with the promise of achieving a middle-income status for the country.

The “Developmental State Project” of Prime Minister Meles Zenawi openly contested the neoliberal mainstream. It explicitly rejected the idea of free markets as an ideal tool for boosting production and allocating surplus. It was based on the concept of a developmentally active government that directs an economy with a controlled private market and a large part of state controlled enterprises. “Ethiopia is probably the only country in Africa that steadfastly resisted the neoliberal pressure of World Bank and International Monetary Fund to reduce the extension service of the state.” (Schmitt 2018:15) Against recommendations of the World Bank and IMF, the Ethiopian government decided to even increase and gender-balance the net of state-financed “developmental agents”, supporting and training the traditional farmers on the *kebele* level to at least two or three such agents per *kebele*, including at least one woman.

The main Ethiopian development agenda is poverty reduction, as expressed in the Sustainable Development and Poverty Reduction Programme (SDPRP 2002/03 – 2004/05) and in the Plan for Accelerated and Sustained Development to End Poverty (PASDEP 2005/06 – 2009/2010) (FDRE 2010: vii). Under those plans, the strategy of Agricultural Development Led Industrialisation (ADLI) was established, resulting – among other effects – in the distribution of vast estates to in-

ternational investors (see the article of Ingrid Hartmann in this issue of TRIALOG, p. 79–81). Under the “Growth and Transformation Plan I and II” (2010–2015 and 2015–2020, see FDRE 2010 / 2015), manufacturing and industry should play a leading role, with the aim to triple the percentage of exports. The main agricultural export products and the top foreign-currency earners are still coffee, oil seeds, and cut flowers, in addition to gold. But these exports were not sufficient to improve the balance of payments. Meles Zenawi thus advocated “an export-led industrialisation strategy” and a classical import substitution strategy for primary consumption goods.

The biggest part of the federal budget was devoted to “poverty-reduction programmes”, mainly in rural areas, and in the three other areas: “food security and agriculture”, “health and education”, and “basic infrastructure” (roads, water, electricity). This was partly financed with the state budget and bank credits, and partly through fairly large amounts of foreign aid. “In 2010 the Net Development Assistance received was around \$3.5 billion, it represented around a third of the national budget. It had doubled during the course of the last five years. The United States was the largest contributor, followed by the UK and the European Union.” (Lefort 2015: 365–366) In addition, Ethiopia negotiated with China to construct large transport infrastructure projects, including highways, railroads, and the first urban light-rail system in Sub-Saharan Africa.

“Despite recent disputes over the announced growth figures, all agree that rates have been impressive for the last ten years.” (Vaughan 2015: 307) From 2004 to 2011, economic growth has averaged around 10.6% per year, more than twice the Sub-Saharan African average (World Bank 2012).

## Ethiopia – at a crucial point of its history?

Meles Zenawi died in August 2012. His deputy since 2010, Hailemariam Desalegn, was appointed Prime minister. In the elections of 2015, the governing party scored a landslide victory receiving all seats in parliament. Hence, protests, discussions and violent repression occurred after the election, fuelled as well by the new master plan for Addis Ababa, which included parts of Oromia without a meaningful participation of the affected Oromo population (see the article of Melaku Tanku in this issue of TRIALOG, p. 33–39). In October 2016, a state of emergency was declared and not lifted until August 2017.

Under pressure of the Oromo population (the largest ethnic group with almost a third of the country’s population), the OPDO, the Oromia party within the EPRDF, demanded more democratic decisions and a change to more representative voting laws. In this context, the Prime Minister resigned and, in December 2017, a crisis session of the EPRDF was called. In March 2018, a new Prime Minister was elected. It was the first time that an Oromo, Dr. Abiy Ahmed Ali, became chairman of the ruling party and head of the government.

It looks as if Ethiopia could be at a crucial point. The young generation demands to be heard, and some groups with more traditional ways of life need to be considered in a context of a more inclusive discussion of development. To forge and sustain a national vision of self-determined development in the context of an increasingly urbanised society, the country will need to vigorously expand the space in which different ideas are debated.

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# Tracing Addis Ababa's Historic Urban Development

Laura von Puttkamer, Hans Harms

## **Auf den Spuren der Stadtentwicklungsgeschichte von Addis Abeba**

*Addis Abeba, die florierende Hauptstadt von Äthiopien (wörtlich übersetzt heißt sie „Neue Blume“), hat eine relativ kurze, aber sehr komplexe Geschichte. Dieser Artikel untersucht die Einflüsse der verschiedenen Regime auf die städtische Entwicklung und Form von Addis Abeba, beginnend mit der Gründung im Jahr 1886 und der Zeit unter den Kaisern Menelik II und Haile Selassie. Die sechsjährige italienische Besetzung ab 1936 brachte die ersten Masterpläne mit sich und selbst der französische Architekt und Stadtplaner Le Corbusier reichte einen Vorschlag für die von Mussolini bestimmte Überplanung Addis Abebas als koloniale Hauptstadt des „Ostafrikanischen Italienischen Reichs“ ein. Einige wichtige Strukturen der Italiener sind bis heute erhalten geblieben. Die auf den 2. Weltkrieg folgende Phase der Modernisierung unter Kaiser Haile Selassie gab wichtige Impulse für die Entwicklung der Stadt. Das sozialistische Derg-Regime von 1974-1991 setzte mit der Verstaatlichung von Grund und Boden neue Fakten, welche die räumliche und soziale Entwicklung stark beeinflussten. Die erneute Revolution von 1991 beendete das DERG Regime und führte zur Gründung der Demokratischen Republik Äthiopien, zur Selbstverwaltung der Städte sowie zu umfangreichen staatlichen Bauprogrammen für Infrastruktur und Wohnungsbau. Die gegensätzlichen politischen Systeme haben die Stadt räumlich und sozial geprägt. Diese vielfältige Prägung ist Teil des sich z.B. auch in traditionellen sozialen Netzwerken manifestierenden Potentials, mit dem das Addis Abeba von heute die aktuellen Herausforderungen aus wirtschaftlicher Entwicklung, Zuwanderung, Zersiedlung und Armut angehen kann.*

## **Introduction**

Addis Ababa is Ethiopia's centre of political, economic and commercial power. The city has a relatively short but complex history as the capital of a country that is, in 2018, still 70-80% rural (statistical figures vary, UNDESA 2018). The city is characterised by countless contrasts and inequalities, from shining new hotels and innumerable construction sites for high-rise buildings, including seats of international organisations like the headquarters of the African Union and the UN Economic Commission of Africa, to very poor areas where 80% of the poorer population, many of them migrants from rural areas, live in mostly one-story housing with almost no infrastructure (water/sanitation).

In 2018, the city had about 4.4 million inhabitants and a very high growth rate of approx. 4,4% per year (UNDESA 2018). [Figure 1]

The urban development of Addis Ababa has gone through different phases since its foundation in 1886. It was grounded in a period when Ethiopia's then ruler, Emperor Menelik, was expanding the country's territory southwards and he decided to change his governance and to establish a permanent capital.

This article aims at giving an overview of Addis Ababa's urban development and planning history, starting from the city's foundation, covering the Italian occupation, the

**Figure 1:** This typical panorama of a road in Addis Ababa shows the bustling street life and the diversity of housing and transportation. Source: Laura von Puttkamer





modernisation phase under Haile Selassie, the socialist Derg Regime, and the current government. The main challenges for the city today include urban sprawl, lack of basic infrastructure in the informal areas, poverty, HIV/AIDs, and housing problems. The proposal of a new development plan for Addis Ababa that included surrounding areas of the Oromia regional state provoked, in 2017, the current ethnic conflict as it had been elaborated without sufficient involvement of the Oromia population. However, considering the complexity of the city's history and planning laws, this article can only offer an introductory overview.

## Phase 1: Foundation

The foundation of Addis Ababa in 1886 is an almost mythical story with several variations. At that time, the indigenous Oromo people inhabited the so-called "*Finfinne* area", an area with hills and ravines, a pleasant climate and, most importantly, some hot springs. Ethiopia was ruled by Emperor Menelik II, whose wife, Taitu, liked the hot springs. In 1881, Menelik had shifted the capital from Ankober, the former Shewa capital, to the Entoto Mountains north of Addis Ababa due to their strategic location for further expansion of his realm to the south. It was cold and windy in the hills, however, and the hot springs with their healing effects down in the valley simply seemed much more appealing. When the Emperor returned in 1886 from a campaign to Harrar, his wife, Queen Taitu, had moved from Entoto Hill to set up camp near hot springs in Finfinne. This is where the new city started. Initially, a reception hall, a palace, and several subsequent state buildings were constructed at the hot springs, nicknamed (in Amharic) the "new flower", or "Addis Ababa". [Figure 2 and 3]

The developing capital was adapted to the challenging morphology of mountains and gorges with a difference of up to 800 metres in altitude and many small rivers. The indigenous city was initially an agglomeration of villages, known as "*sefers*". A *sefer* is an area similar to a military settlement or camp, which is allocated to a chief or a state dignitary. The residences of the nobility were built on top of small hills and eventually surrounded by the humble round *tukuls* of their followers (Giorghis 2014). This city was gradually extended with buildings of further governmental functions, and began to include a more diverse mix of settlements occupied by ethnic groups as well as regional warlords and nobility who built their larger residences on the highest ground in their respective *sefers* and had their families, soldiers and servants settle around them in a concentric hierarchy, reflecting the feudal social order. The open patches between *sefers* were steep and hard to build on, which allowed those outside the settlements to continue their rural way of life, raising cattle and farming (Giorghis 2008). From the beginning, the new city was multi-ethnic and socially mixed. Giorghis (2008) mentions, "It should be noted that Addis Ababa is an indigenously grown African city, which developed spontaneously in its early years of formation."

In the early tradition, Ethiopian cities were composed of three main centres (political centre, church, and market). Thus, Addis Ababa grew around three nodes: the palace, St. George's Church, and Arada. Around these nodes, large and scattered settlements started to sprawl (Mahitane



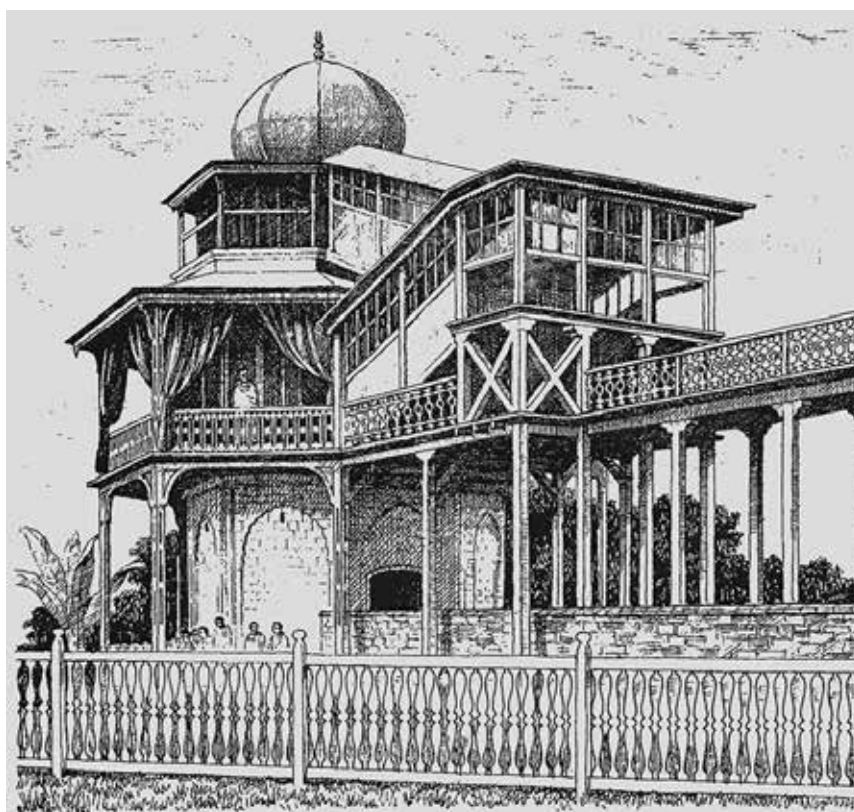
2007: 2). The quickly rising population created problems: there was a hunger crisis from 1889 to 1892, and a shortage of wood for construction and cooking. Menelik considered moving the capital again, but Alfred Ilg, a Swiss advisor to the Emperor, had the idea of planting Eucalyptus trees from imported seeds from Australia. These trees are still dominant in Addis today.

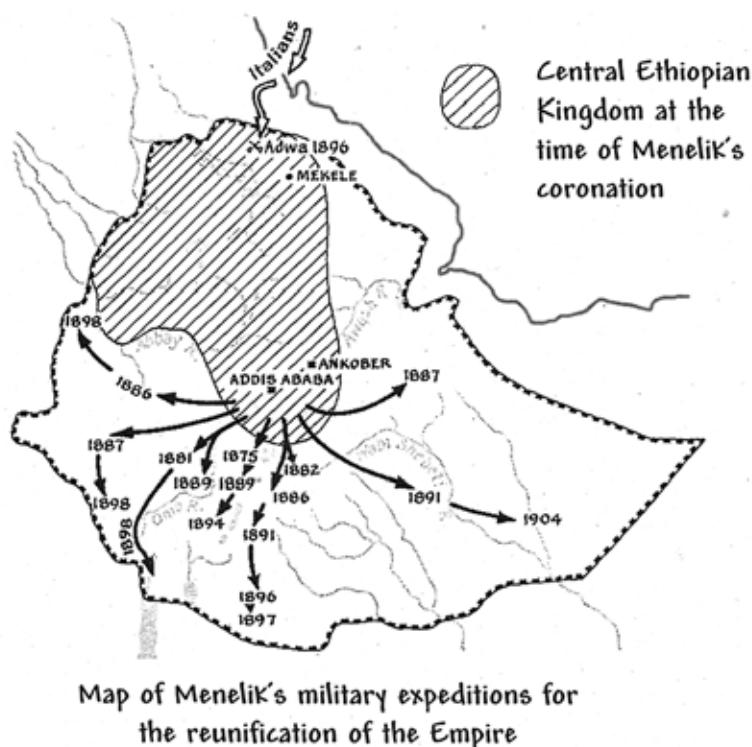
Ethiopia has a series of old historical cities (like Axum, which goes back to the 7<sup>th</sup> century AD, Lalibela, and Gondar). They were initiated by the respective sovereigns, while the surrounding areas and population remained rural. The country is characterised by an urbanisation process that started slowly and late, only really taking off in the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

The Battle of Adwa in 1895/96, against Italians invading from Eritrea, was a triumphant victory for Ethiopia and its Emperor Menelik II and kicked off the modernisation of

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**Figure 2:** The emperor's palace on a hilltop with surrounding buildings and crowds of people. Source: Photo by Dennis Gerard, from Pankhurst and Gerard (1927), Photo Nr. 147

**Figure 3:** Part of Emperor Menelik's personal quarters in the palace. Source: © drawing by Erik Robson, with the friendly permission of Erik Robson, from: Last, Pankhurst and Robson (1969: 48)  
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**Figure 4:** Map of Emperor Menelik's expeditions for the reunification of the empire. Source: © drawing by Erik Robson, with the friendly permission of Erik Robson, from: Last, Pankhurst and Robson (1969: 50)

the country. The peace treaty of Addis Ababa acknowledged and accepted the independence of Ethiopia. The victory confirmed and secured Ethiopia's present borders against European colonisation. [Figure 4] The establishment of trade routes also promoted Addis's growth and



**Figure 5:** Azekian family residence at the time of Emperor Menelik. Source: © drawing by Fasil Giorgis; with the friendly permission of Fasil Giorgis, from: Melchers (2014: 10)



**Figure 6:** Addis Ababa's first hotel was built by the order of Empress Taitu in 1898 and named after her. It was heavily damaged by a fire in 2015. There are plans to rebuild it. Source: Di Abel Asrat – Opera propria, CC BY-SA 4.0, accessible at: <<https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=37867659>> [last accessed June 29, 2018]

importance, as its central location in the country made it a natural nodal point. In 1909, Addis was founded administratively and saw a quick development into a comparatively modern and well-equipped city. Merchants and builders from other countries arrived and brought in new skills. [Figure 5] In 1917, the railway station was built by a French company to connect Addis to then-French Djibouti and open the country to European interests and foreign trade. Countless new streets and the first grand hotel, named after the Empress Taitu, were constructed. [Figure 6] Additionally, telegraph services were instituted and a modern postal system simplified communications. The city was centred around Menelik's palace. The popular and modernist emperor managed to consolidate Addis's status as the new and permanent capital of Ethiopia and as a "modernist monument for the rest of Ethiopia and the world in general" (Zelege 2010: 118).

This infrastructure-based development in the 1910s and '20s resulted in a more connected city, although the different military settlements still existed on their own (Tufa 2008: 54). Under Emperor Haile Selassie, who was crowned in 1930, the modernisation of Ethiopia went ahead at an even quicker, almost aggressive pace, despite disagreements with more-conservative Ethiopian aristocrats. [Figure 7] His travels to Europe had confirmed his plans for modernisation, which included investments in public services, hospitals, schools, churches, newspapers, commercial sites, and the first airline (Mehretu and Gebre-Egziabher 2013: 290). His international connections and the non-colonial status of Ethiopia made it possible for the country to become a member of the League of Nations in 1923. Ethiopia was also a founding member of the United Nations in 1945. [Figure 8]

## Phase 2: The Italian occupation and its influence on Addis's urban development and architecture (1936-1941)

In October 1935, the Italian Fascist forces started a two-pronged invasion of Ethiopia from Eritrea and from Italian Somaliland. The Ethiopian troops fought major decisive battles, but were overpowered by Italy's use of mustard gas and aerial bombs (Villary 1956: 156). They captured Addis Ababa in May 1936, and the Ethiopian forces



resorted to guerrilla warfare tactics. The Italians occupied the country for five years. They never managed to turn Ethiopia into a colonial state, however, making Ethiopia the only African country apart from Liberia that was never a colony. During the occupation, Emperor Haile Selassie went into exile in Britain. He protested at the League of Nations in Geneva against the attack and occupation, but Britain and France, as colonial powers who had a stake in the economy of Ethiopia, did not support Ethiopia, as a member state, at the League of Nations.

Mussolini had big plans for Addis Ababa to become the capital of his “Africa Orientale Italiana” empire, which also included Eritrea and Italian Somalia. His intentions in Ethiopia were to find revenge for the lost battle in Adwa in 1896, to take the resources of the country, and take over land for Italian settlements (Villari 1956). In Addis Ababa, he invested in governmental buildings and additional infrastructure (Mehretu and Gebre-Egziabher 2013: 290, Tufa 2008: 36). But the scattered, irregular city with few prominent buildings and eucalyptus trees hiding most structures did not impress the Italians at all (Antonsich 2000: 329). In order to redevelop the city as a capital of the Italian empire in Africa, the Italian government started an architectural competition for the re-design of Addis. Many

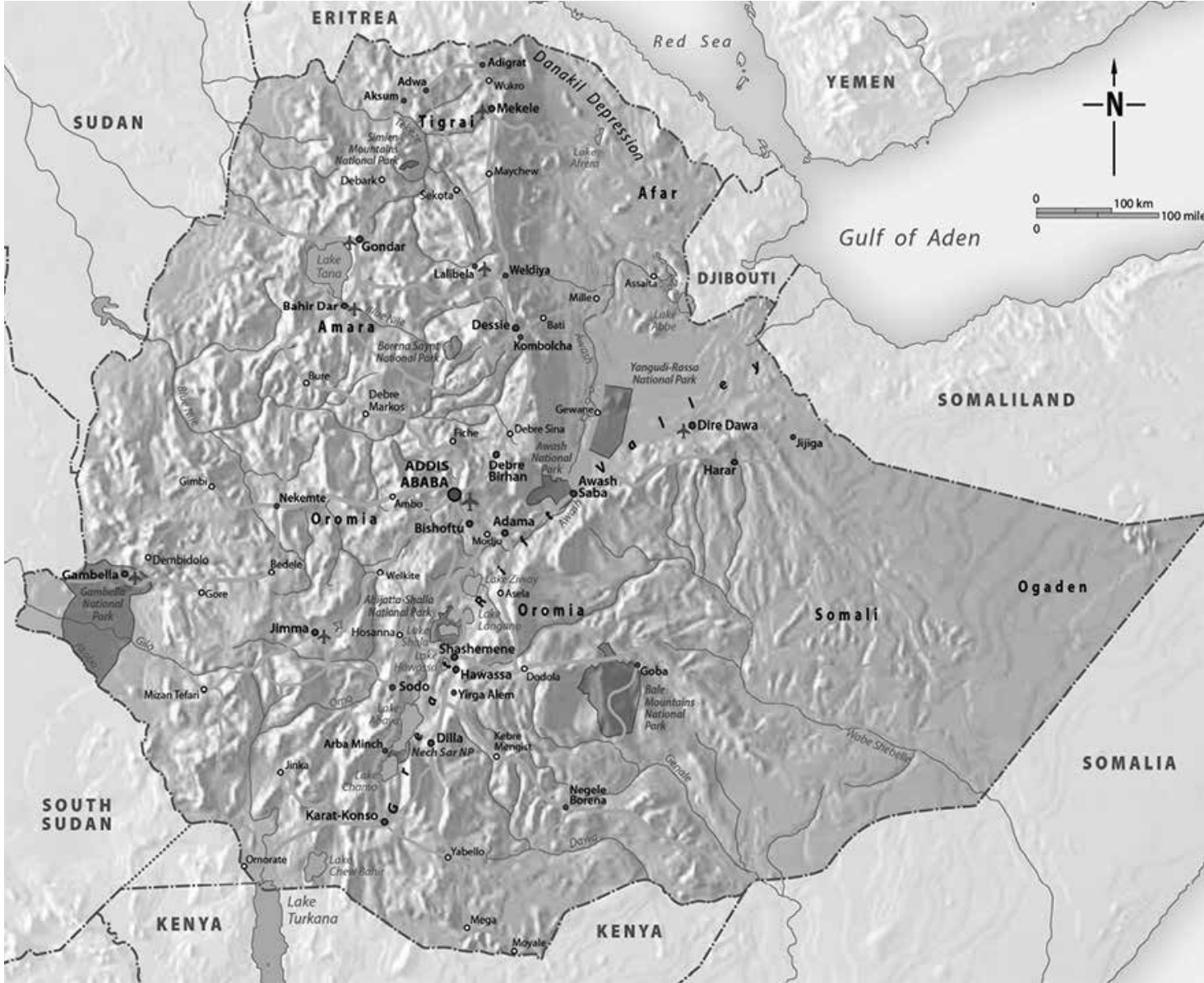


**Figure 7:** Lion of Judah statue at the end of Churchill Road, next to the railway station. Erected in 1930 at the coronation of Haile Selassie, it has a controversial history as symbol of the Ethiopian emperors. It was looted by the Italian occupiers in 1935 and taken to Rome. Finally it returned to Addis Ababa after long negotiations in the 1960s (see Kiribiye 2015). Source: Photo by Monika Wiebusch

Italian architects, and also the Swiss-French architect Le Corbusier, sent proposals. The precondition for any planning concept was racial segregation, as planning and architecture was to be used to segregate the colonised population from the Europeans and to establish an apartheid society.

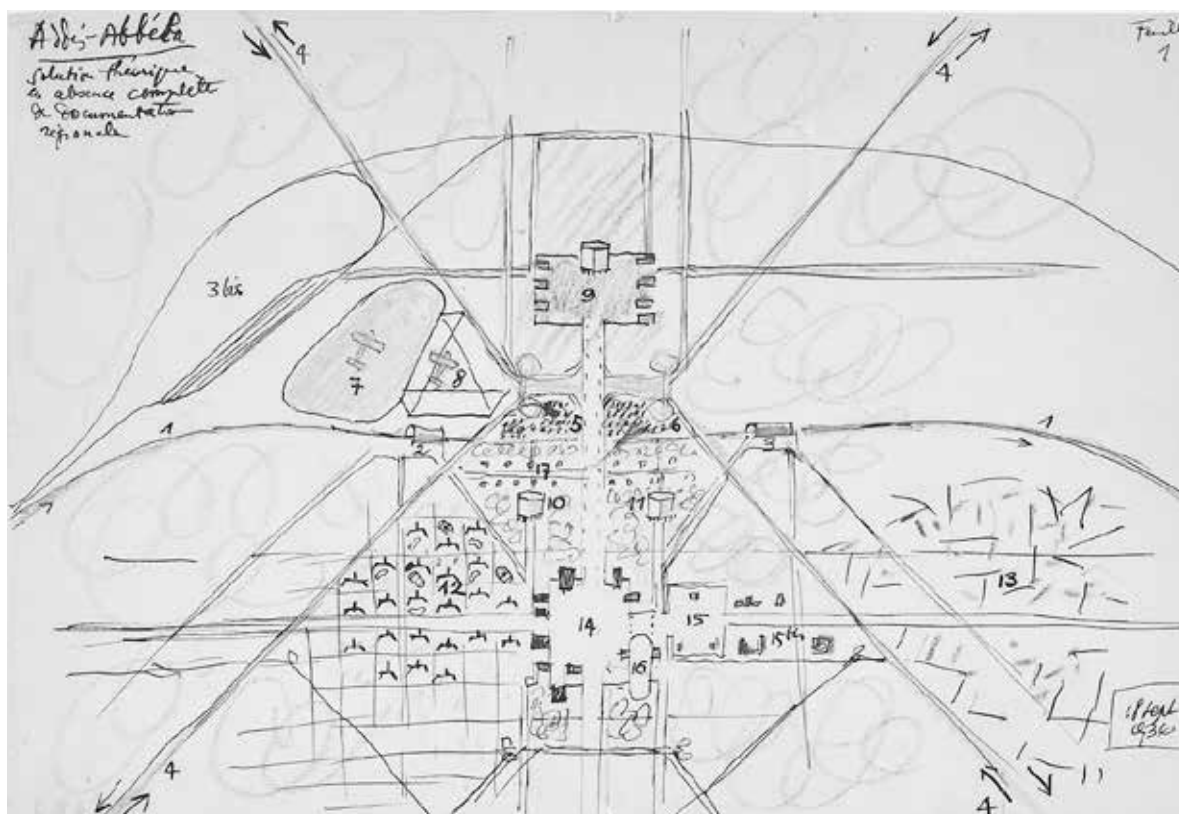
Le Corbusier’s proposal for Addis was based on the idea of the Radiant City, consisting of high-rise buildings. A grand boulevard would cross the city from north to south, segregating it into a native and a European sector. The heart of the city would be military headquarters and governmental

**Figure 8:** Map of Ethiopia with bordering countries. Source: UNESCO cultural world heritage sites map in: Ethiopian Tourism Organisation (o. J.)





**Figure 9:** This draft of Le Corbusier's master plan for Addis Ababa shows the strict segregation of the city with duplicate structures on each side. Source: Courtesy of Fondation Le Corbusier



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**Figure 10:** Impostazione 1936 plan – the Italian architects Giudi and de Valle proposed this plan for colonial Addis Ababa, resembling Le Corbusier's ideals. Source: Di Jose Antonio – disegno, Pubblicodominio, accessible online at: <<https://it.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?curid=2404950>> [last accessed June 29, 2018]

buildings, including a palace. Strictly planned zones were linked by green areas. Dainese mentions Le Corbusier's "fascination with Fascist central authority, and his desire to participate in the coercive construction of imperial identities" (Dainese 2015: 2). The "urban apartheid" was visible in the intended duplication of all uses: two residential areas, two bus and railway stations, two central squares, etc. Therefore, Le Corbusier's suggestion can be seen as experimenting with "the role of architecture itself as social object able to separate existing societies and superimpose new ones" (Dainese 2015: 13). [Figure 9]

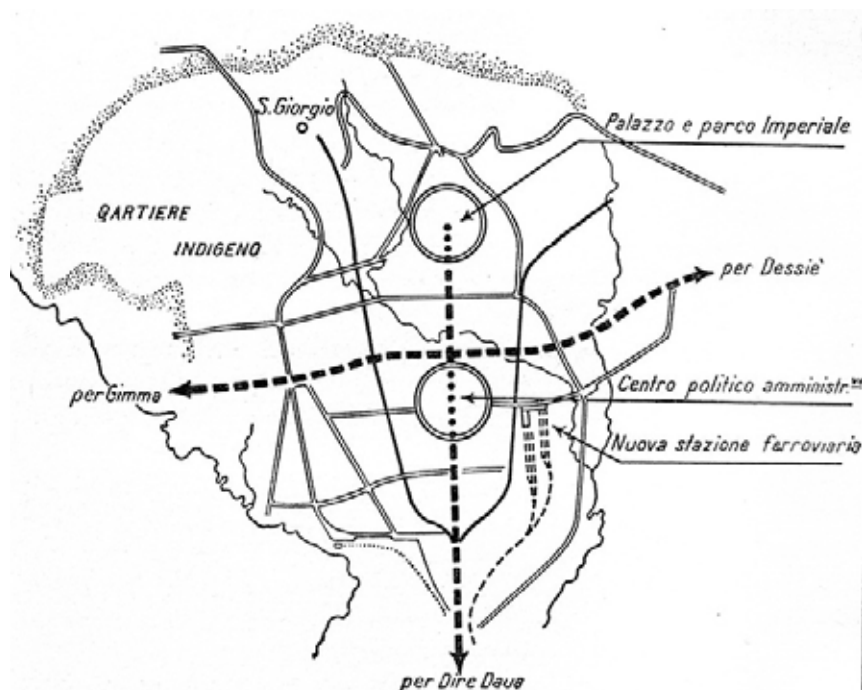
However, the Italian Duce did not accept foreign suggestions, so in the end Ignazio Giudi and Cesare de Valle

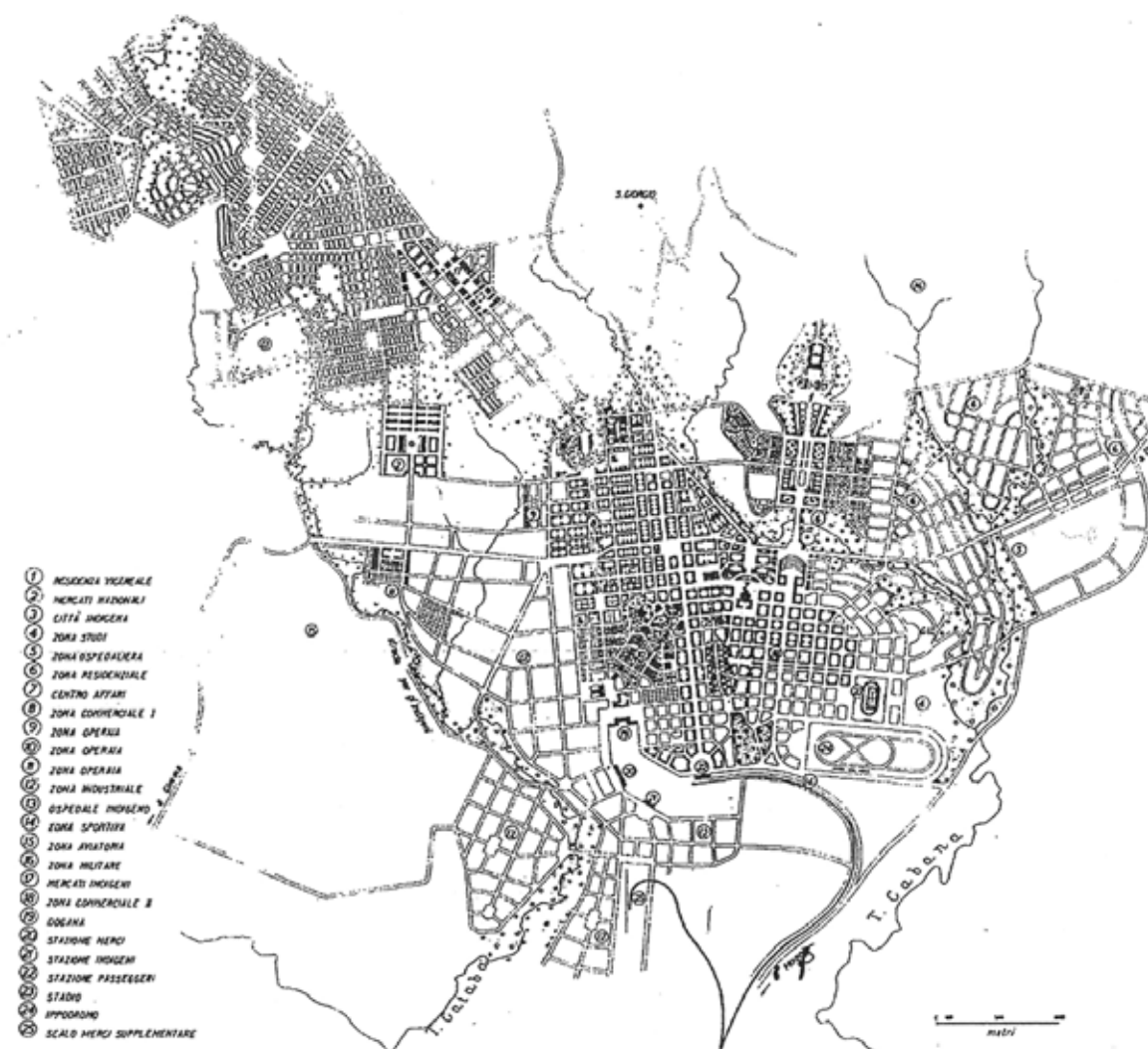
influenced with their master plan (1936) the architecture, planning, and functional division of Addis Ababa. [Figure 10] They planned a city based on grid street systems with volumetric building blocks and a monumental axis to represent the regime's ideology. [Figure 10 and 11] The strict segregation with large neighbourhoods for the indigenous stretching to the North-west (*città indigena* – 3 – in Figure 11) and residential quarters for the Europeans to the West (– 6 –) is underlined with a hospital zone (– 5 –) in the West and the *ospedale indigeno* (– 13 –) in the East. [Figure 11]

The economic centre of the city (Arada) was taken over by the Italians for European use only. It was renamed Piazza, and the indigenous people were expelled into another area east of the city, called Mercato. There, a completely new market structure was developed for Indian and Muslim traders. Ethiopians were not allowed there, they had to trade under the open sky. Mercato is now the largest market in Africa and has kept the Italian name. [Figure 12] In Addis Ketema, where the Mercato is located, the grid system of roads introduced by the Italians is still visible (Angélli and Siress 2008: 99). Strict zoning persists with residential flats facing inwards and stalls facing outside. Today, Mercato and the indigenous market have more or less merged and it is here that countless migrants from rural areas make their living informally.

The five short years of occupation and a lack of resources resulted in a big gap between the Italian plans and reality in Addis Ababa. With the start of the Second World War and the invasion of the British Forces in 1940 (as a response to the Italian attack on British Somalia), the Italian plan was soon stopped and they could not realise more than about 200 buildings.

After the war and the Italian defeat, many Italians stayed in Addis Ababa and ended up living in typical Ethiopian houses and even having inter-racial relations. Piazza, the





**Figure 11:** Addis Ababa Master Plan second modification, Giudi and de Valle 1938. Source: Diamantini and Patassini (1993)

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new name for a part of Arada, shows many Italian-style houses and is particularly popular among tourists. The new town hall of the city – one of the relevant buildings from the 1960s – is located here, as is one of the most impressive statues of Menelik II, commemorating his victory over Italy in the Battle of Adwa. The neighbouring Kazan-chis (the name is an adaptation of the Italian "Casa INCIS") shows various remains of Italian housing for public employees.

The Italians had a bigger influence on the urban planning than the architecture of Addis: one of the first strategic moves of the occupiers was to prohibit any new buildings or restorations of destroyed ones in order to "freeze" growth until a new plan was implemented (Fuller 1996). During their years of occupation, the Italians introduced an impressive infrastructure of many new roads radiating outwards of Addis Ababa and connecting other cities with the capital. A road network was considered a strategic Italian priority since the Fascists believed that the Roman Empire flourished because of its road network (Antonsich 2000: 328).

### Phase 3: Return of Emperor Haile Selassie: modernisation of a feudal system (1941-1974)

Ethiopia was liberated of its Italian occupiers with the help of the British in 1941. Haile Selassie returned from England to Ethiopia and while he re-established feudalism as a



**Figure 12:** Zoning is still omnipresent in the market area Mercato, where different goods are displayed in corresponding aisles and housing is towards the back of the streets. Source: Monika Wiebusch, 2009



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political system, he also boosted economic and technical development. During the restoration period, Britain gave economic aid in an agreement in January 1942 and was conceded privileges in the internal affairs of the country until 1944, when a new agreement was reached and the direction was transferred to the Ethiopian government (Schwab 1972: 35). Ethiopia was one of the founding members of the United Nations. With the new financial and trade institutions in Washington, including the World Bank, American influence started by providing loans for roads connecting the capital with the regions of Ethiopia.

The Emperor continued, after World War II, to open Ethiopia to international powers and to traders and craftsmen from different countries. Former Italian soldiers were treated magnanimously and in many cases decided to stay. They contributed new, modern services like electronics, engineering or automotive skills that few Ethiopians had. The push for development also resulted in the building of much critical infrastructure such as a university, banks, and colleges. Nowadays, many Modernist buildings of this period – like the Commercial Bank of Ethiopia, the Kennedy Library, the Filoha Thermal Bath, and the 1960s Hilton Hotel – remain.

However, rural development was neglected, which soon resulted in a strong migration to urban centres in all of Ethiopia. Addis Ababa grew by 5%, annually. Not enough employment opportunities, economic stagnation, and rapid urban sprawl resulted in countless problems (Tufa 2008: 42).

Different master plans were developed with the intention to regulate urban development in Addis. In the early 1950s, Emperor Haile Selassie invited Sir Patrick Abercrombie, the author of the Greater London Plan. The Emperor thought Abercrombie would be able to transform Addis into a beautiful city that could serve as a model for other African cities. Abercrombie suggested a green belt around the city and the development of satellite cities (Doumbia 2012: 8). Addis itself would be organised into neighbourhood units surrounded by green parkways and three ring roads, which would keep traffic away from the city centre. However, the exponential growth and the very different conditions compared to London, especially the weak municipality, made these proposals hard to realise. The ring roads actually attracted unintended settlement development on their sides. But Abercrombie's plan resulted in the dissolution of the idea for monumental features and of the grid street system developed by the Italian occupiers (Tufa 2008: 42).

In 1965, the Frenchman De Marien proposed his master plan introducing water infrastructure and focussed on the revitalisation of the city's central axis, with Arada (Piazza) at its core and Churchill Avenue as a main road, resulting in a new spatial order. At the same time, no attention was paid to the rest of the city. There were hardly any zoning laws, which resulted in chaotic housing development, dominated by the real estate market (Mehretu and Gebre-Egziabher 2013: 289).

Haile Selassie's government attempted to formulate an urban housing policy. A Department of Housing was established under the Ministry of Public Works and Urban Development. Also, three five-year development plans focused on the need for large-scale construction of

low-cost healthy dwellings. But in spite of the good intentions, few of these objectives were realised. The plans faced two primary challenges: firstly, the urban land was in the hands of a small group of landlords (in Addis Ababa, 95% of privately owned urban land was in the hands of 5% of the population) (Giorgis 2014, Wolde-Mariam 1970). Secondly, securing finance was another hurdle.

## Phase 4: The Derg regime and its influence (1974-1991)

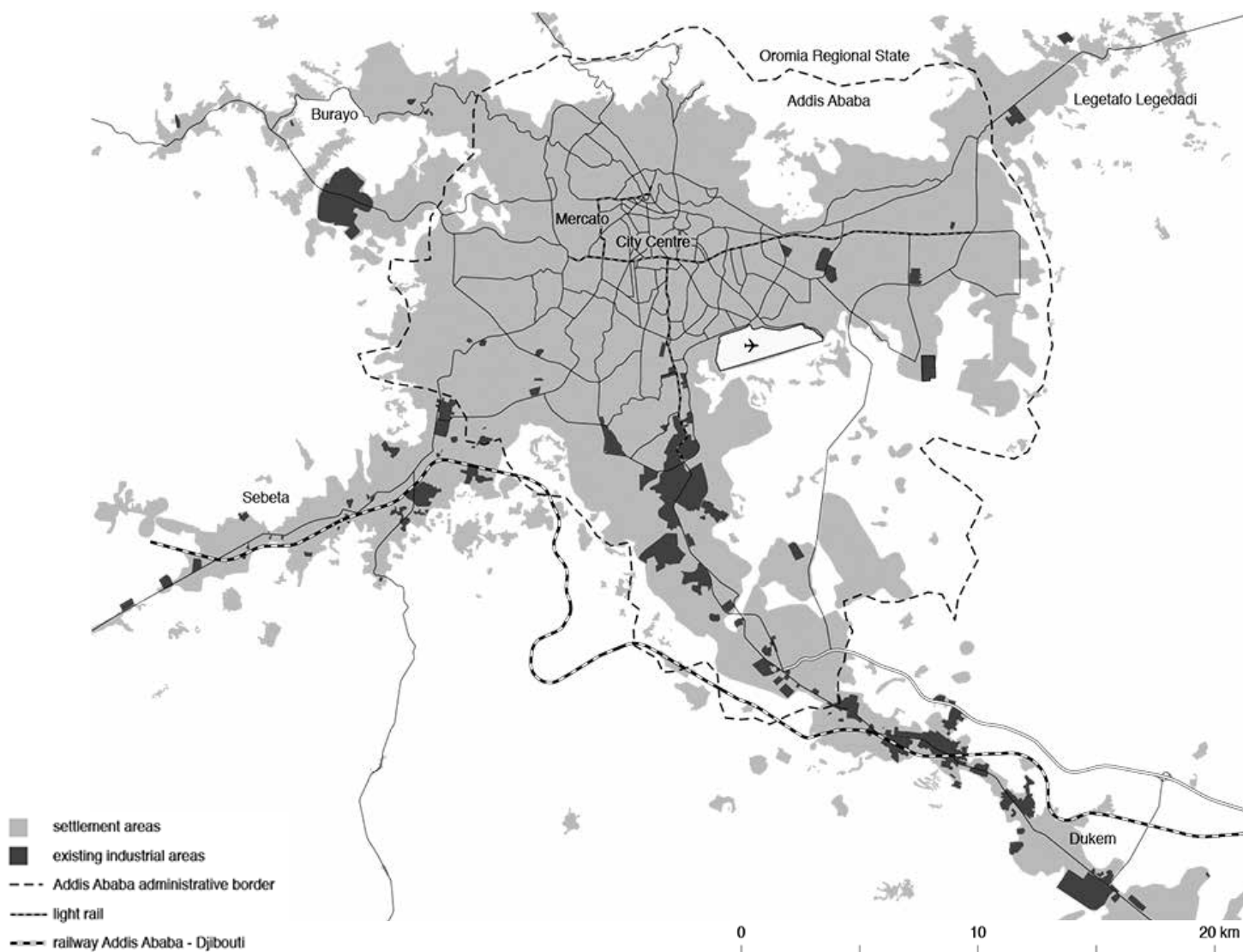
In September 1974, a major political change occurred in Ethiopia when a Marxist military junta (the Derg, the Amharic word for "committee"), connected to a left-wing student movement and backed by the Soviet Union, overthrew the feudal system and the pro-Western ruler Haile Selassie. This was preceded by political demonstrations and demands for reforms in urban areas. The military government launched a radical land reform in 1975 as one of their first moves. Under the Land Reform Proclamation of 1975, all rural and urban land was nationalised. The new constitution claimed that all land belonged to the state and the peoples of Ethiopia.

Before the revolution, all land was controlled by the Emperor and the feudal landlords. A large part was also under the control of the Orthodox Church. The land tenure systems were very complicated and differed in the north and in the south of the country. An obligation to pay taxes was attached to the land, not to individuals. The peasants who actually farmed the land had a right to use the land and the obligation to hand over a fixed portion of the produce to the state, the nobility, or the church. In addition, up to a third of their time was dedicated to forced labour for the landlord. The Derg abolished these relations of feudal ownership and exploitation, and distributed land in the rural areas to peasant households on the basis of family size and other criteria (Weldegebriel 2013). The result has been a high degree of relative equality within the rural society, especially in the southern part of the country, where the new arrangements were seen very positively. The military government focused on rural rather than on urban development. Literacy programmes were organised, and peasant cooperatives were promoted. Later forms of forced resettlement, the so-called "villagisation programmes" (Mulatu 1993, Getachew 1989), had the aim of increasing rural productivity by forming larger production units, but failed badly. This led to serious conflicts with the peasants and also caused disagreement and unrest within the military government.

Under the Proclamation 292/1975, all urban land and houses were nationalised. Property owners were allowed to retain one house for their residence. All additional houses were put under the administration of the neighbourhood administration (the *kebele*). The same proclamation also specified that "residential buildings could be produced only by state enterprises, municipal governments, cooperatives and individuals for personal consumption". This excluded the private sector from housing investment, but the government lacked the finances and capacity to meet the rising need for housing. By the mid-1980s, 60% of the housing stock in Addis Ababa was rental housing, managed mostly by the *kebele*.

The Derg regime met internal armed resistance from large landowners and royalists, and in 1977 Somalia attacked





Ethiopia in the Ogaden region. With the help of a Soviet airlift of weapons and Cuban combat forces, the Ethiopians could repel the attack. But the drain on resources weakened the regime. Internal conflicts, external wars and the neglect of the big famine from 1983-1985 in rural Ethiopia resulted in countless deaths.

The change of the political system had also interrupted the implementation of de Marien's plan (Mahiteme 2007: 20). Under the new regime, the master plan was reviewed and extended by an Ethiopian team under the consultancy of the Hungarian planner C.K. Polonyi. The revised plan proposed a megalopolis development extending 100 kilometres to the south of Addis Ababa, which included small towns and linked rural and urban areas. The objectives were to make the city self-sufficient in agricultural products and to incorporate a larger area into the spatial unit of the capital (Mahiteme 2007: 20). Addis Ababa, at the time, had 1.5 million inhabitants. As part of Polonyi's advice, Meskel Square was redesigned into a central place for parades and political purpose and was renamed Revolutionary Square. In 1986, a revision of the Polonyi Plan was started in a cooperation between Italy and Ethiopia to guide the development for a period of 20 years, and to create an integrated metropolis with decentralised development and new functional areas for commerce, administration, and local centres. Central features of this plan were the introduction of zoning and the inclusion of the

neighbouring cities of Akaki and Qaliti for public service, commercial freight, and the growth of Addis. However, this master plan was only adopted in 1994, after the fall of the Derg. Eight years of waiting for a new comprehensive plan resulted in urban sprawl, fragmentation, and chaotic development (Tufa 2008), although growth rates slowed during the Derg regime.

An important date for the Derg regime and its impact on Addis's urban shape was in 1984, when the regime celebrated its tenth anniversary. State leaders from socialist countries like the Soviet Union and East Germany attended the exuberant and very exclusive celebrations. In the south of Churchill Road, the Tigrachin Monument ("Our Struggle Monument") was erected for the anniversary. Today, some of the monuments like the Tigrachin Monument are still there, but uncared for.

#### Phase 5: Current state (1991 to today)

In 1991, the Derg was overthrown by a coalition of ethnic parties. The Derg had freed the country from feudalism, but also had left it in a situation with dysfunctional structures and high poverty rates (Mehretu and Gebre-Egziabher 2013: 293). The Derg regime's legacy, but also the legacies of feudalism, fascism and modernism, poses many challenges for the complex urban development of contemporary Addis Ababa. [Figure 13]

**Figure 13:** Map of Addis Ababa and neighbouring towns. Source: map elaborated by Anke Hagemann, Elke Beyer and Rucha Kelkar based on information on Google Maps, OpenStreet-Map, <africaopendata.org> and AACAMPO

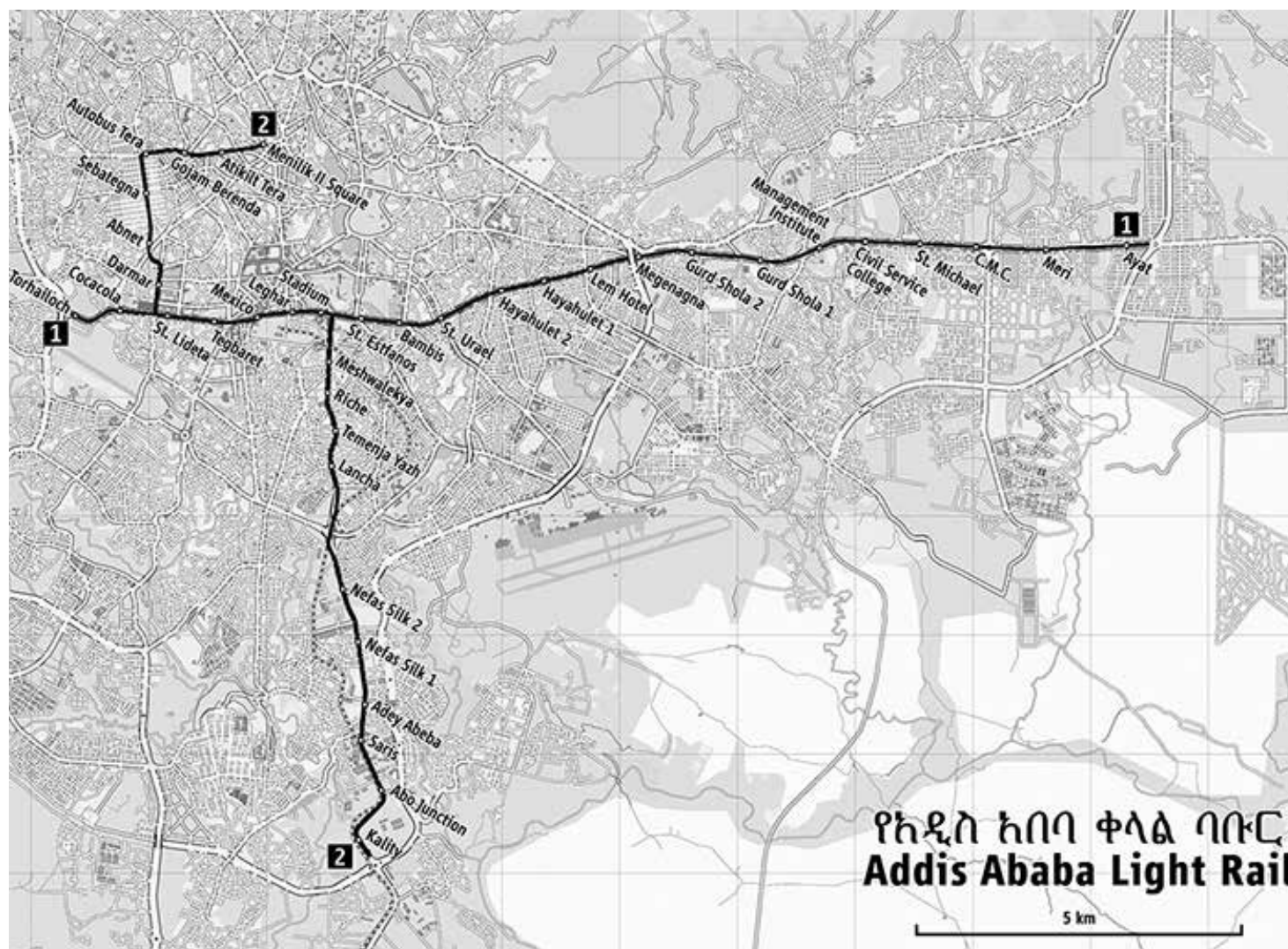
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**Figure 14:** View of the Light Rail at Lideta station, Addis Ababa. Source: Photo by A. Savin – Wikimedia Commons. Accessible online at: <[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Addis\\_Ababa\\_Light\\_Rail#/media/File:ET\\_Addis\\_asv2018-01\\_img07\\_Light\\_Rail.jpg](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Addis_Ababa_Light_Rail#/media/File:ET_Addis_asv2018-01_img07_Light_Rail.jpg)> [last accessed June 29, 2018]



**Figure 15:** Map of the Addis Ababa Light Rail with its two lines and 39 stations. Source: Maximilian Dörrbecker (Chumwa) - Wikimedia Commons, using OpenStreetMap data for the background. Accessible online at: <[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Addis\\_Ababa\\_Light\\_Rail#/media/File:Map\\_of\\_the\\_Addis\\_Ababa\\_Light\\_Rail.png](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Addis_Ababa_Light_Rail#/media/File:Map_of_the_Addis_Ababa_Light_Rail.png)> [last accessed June 29, 2018]





Under the present government, a new constitution and ethnically based sub-states have been created and cities are now self-governed. Housing is being produced through state construction programmes, and transport infrastructure with the help of Chinese firms and capital.

This is accompanied with current trends in architecture and urban planning, resulting in a very diverse city. At the same time, Addis has managed to remain “one of the most indigenously authentic cities in Africa” (Mehretu and Gebre-Egziabher 2013: 289), meaning it was not initiated or planned by colonial powers. Since 2002, Addis is divided into 10 *woredas* (sub-city administrations) and about 100 *kebeles* (neighbourhood administrations). Land in Ethiopia is owned by the government. The Proclamation 455/2005 gives the government decision-making power over land use and many new projects are being promoted with the intention to “modernise” the capital.

In 1999, the Addis Ababa City Administration started the elaboration of a new development plan with the support of French and German development cooperation. The plan aimed at enabling the city to develop more orderly in a “more open” market and in the new political system of a democratic government. The “Addis Ababa Development Plan 2001-2010” was adopted in 2002 by the Addis Ababa City Council. The focus was on integrated strategic planning, and included – for the first time – participatory elements (Tufa, *ibid.*). Again, an inner and an outer ring road as well as axial roads from east to west and from north to south were crucial parts of the new infrastructure. This new road network was implemented and still determines the spatial order of Addis.

Addis Ababa accounts for 35% of Ethiopia’s urban population. It has grown exponentially over the last 30 years, seeing its population triple (Mehretu and Gebre-Egziabher 2013: 292). About half of the city’s residents are immigrants, and the growth rate is estimated at around 4% per year, making Addis one of the fastest growing African cities (*ibid.*). The Addis Ababa City Government continues to focus on urban development with rapid modernisation. One example is the first light rail line in Sub-Saharan Africa that opened in Addis Ababa in 2015, with an east-west and north-south connection. [Figure 14 and 15] The Addis Ababa light rail was sponsored and constructed by Chinese firms and is operated by the Chinese Shenzhen Metro Company. In 2016, the system carried on average 113,500 passengers a day. The tracks are elevated on some parts and on street level at other parts of the city, thus cutting neighbourhoods and making it harder to cross to the other side for cars, minibuses and pedestrians.

Addis Ababa’s position as “Capital of Africa” is evidenced through the presence of the African Union’s headquarters [Figure 16] and, furthermore, by the rapid construction transforming the city on a monthly basis. Western standards are seen as the ideal, even if glass-clad buildings don’t always make sense in Addis’s climate. The “everyday urbanism”, as practised by the low-income population and most rural migrants, is officially not recognised (see article of Nadine Appelhans in



this issue of TRIALOG, p. 56-62). The growing investments from countries like China, Malaysia or Turkey also shape urban development.

In 2014, the draft of a new plan specifying the future development of Addis Ababa was published. This plan, called “Addis Ababa and the Surrounding Oromia Special Zone Integrated Development Plan Project”, defined areas for future growth of the city – also into the surrounding Oromia Regional State. The implementation of this strategy, in a radius of 30 kilometres around Addis Ababa, would have resulted in the displacement of a relevant number of Oromia farmers.

Even though the draft plan had been elaborated in cooperation with the Oromia Regional State, local governments and residents of the Oromia region strongly opposed the draft plan, which they perceived as being annexed by the Addis Ababa City Government. When the national government repeatedly ordered the shooting of protestors in the Oromia region, country-wide protests started in 2015. Long-standing grievances about power and wealth distribution as well as the increasing crackdown on media and civil society groups since 2009 came to light (Human Rights Watch 2016). Although the draft plan was withdrawn in 2016 by the national government and is now being revised, this was too late and conflicts continued. The protests resulted in a state of emergency, lifted only in August 2017 (Human Rights Watch 2017).

▲ **Figure 16:** The African Union’s headquarters was mainly sponsored by the Chinese government. As in socialist times, many poorer urban areas are hidden behind the iron sheets. Source: Laura von Puttkamer

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▲ **Figure 17:** View of a condominium complex in Addis Ababa. Source: Monika Wiebusch, 2010

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Besides the conflicting urban enlargement into the Oromia Regional State, the plan under revision contains several positive measures and tools to guide a sustainable development: it promotes integrated socio-economic development through decentralised urban development, the creation of more job opportunities, and the support of small and medium enterprises. At the same time, many of the well-known problems persist.

One of the main challenges remaining for Addis Ababa is the considerable urban sprawl. With a continuously high urban growth rate, housing is scarce and social housing is insufficient. Addis Ababa's Development Plan (2001- 2010) intended to prioritise housing, slum upgrading, inner-city development, road construction, industry establishment, and environmental protection (Yntiso 2008: 54). For this purpose, decentralisation, participatory processes, improved service delivery, and a reform of civil service were undertaken (ibid.), with considerable achievements. However, low-income dwellers are still being displaced to the outskirts of the city and evictions from informal areas happen often and are not expected to stop anytime soon in the future. On the contrary, continuing urban development and inner-city upgrading will lead to inevitable large-scale displacements, right now and in the future (Yntiso 2008: 59). These resettlements can have negative impacts on residents (Abebe and Hesselberg 2015), including an increased distance to school and health services, an impact on social networks, and the fact that infrastructure provision is much better in the city centre (incl. electricity, water supply, sanitation, garbage collection, phone lines, etc.). But this is not so, or much less so, in the inner-city poor districts.

Currently, there are not enough alternative sites for relocated households (ibid.), and even land on the outskirts of Addis is becoming scarce. This results in the construction of temporary shelters with unsure futures on people's lives. Compensation, which is supposed to be given in form of land or cash, is often not handed out. The condominiums offered by the government to resettles and other applicants are intended for ownership, but there are not enough of them (Dolumbia 2012:

12). [Figure 17] Many prefer to stay in their rented accommodations with intact social networks instead of moving into an anonymous, sometimes badly located new building.

Land is distributed by the government, which owns all land and distributes it via a lottery system for leaseholders. However, this marginalises low- and middle-income households. Their access to land is reduced because fees to participate in the lottery are high, while the process is very slow. These households are being pushed out of the inner city towards the under-served outskirts of Addis Ababa due to the prevailing modernisation paradigm. It is estimated that about 80% of Addis Ababa's population lives in slum-like informal housing and more than a third live below the poverty line (Mehretu and Gebre-Egziabher 2013: 300).

As a result of this uncontrolled growth, environmental conditions in and around Addis are deteriorating rapidly. Open defecation is a huge topic, but air pollution, waste and waste-water management are pressing issues as well. An example of this is the city's waste dump, called "Koshe" (meaning "dirt"), where the city's waste used to be deposited since the 1960s. [Figure 18] The city administration has already constructed a new landfill some 25 km away from Addis Ababa in cooperation with the neighbouring Oromia Regional Administration, and Koshe was closed in early 2016 for rehabilitation. Operations at the new landfill site were suspended in August 2016, after protests by local farmers, who said the new site was poisoning water and killing livestock. As a result, the overstrained Koshe deposit was reopened – and turned into a disaster in March 2017, when a landslide buried nearby houses and killed more than 100 inhabitants and waste-pickers. The city authorities now fight at two fronts: improving the new landfill site and calming the farmers' protest, and then closing Koshe as soon as possible (Davidson 2017).

Addis's "unsustainable urban ecology" (Mehretu and Gebre-Egziabher 2013) is also visible in the sewer system, which is only designed for 200,000 people, meaning it serves about 2% of the city's population



Figure 18: More than 500 people live from sorting and reselling waste at the Koshe kip. Source: Laura von Puttkamer



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(UN-Habitat 2008). Mostly, dry pit latrines and septic tanks are used for sewerage.

## Summary and outlook

The many challenges facing urban planning in Addis today are the result of the city's relatively short but very diverse history. Legacies of each political regime can be found in different forms and in various places throughout Addis Ababa. However, there are different interpretations of the role and effects of plans on Addis Ababa's development. One is that the frequent change of plans has resulted in a very chaotic urban shape that struggles with the heavy influx of migrants and the rapid population growth. Another interpretation is that the early master plans were not very relevant to the socio-economic and physical conditions of the city. They were biased in favour of the foreign planner's own experiences. Additionally, the municipality that was supposed to implement and manage the plans lacked the appropriate policies, the legal framework, and financing.

This changed to some extent when the Office of the Revision of the Addis Ababa Master Plan (ORAAMP) was established in 1999 to transform the existing master plan into a more-effective instrument. Informal employment, low incomes, insufficient and low-standard housing, alarming environmental pollution, and the "astronomical polarity between poor and upscale Addis" (Mehretu 2013: 302) are big challenges for Addis's future. The various planning practices discussed each left some visible imprints in the city. Consequently, Addis Ababa seems to be a city with multiple identities inherited from successive planning legacies. It could be called a "hybrid city" (Mahiteme 2007: 21).

When considering the city's future, it is crucial to list not only the doubtlessly numerous problems, but also to look at its potentials. The willingness of the population to participate in social life and urban planning seems to be one of the biggest assets of Addis. This is evidenced in traditional associations like the *idir* (funeral associations), *iqub* (saving groups) and *mahber* (religious groups) as reliable social security factors. These groups financially support their weakest members and are essential for social networks and social capitals. Many of the associations have started to work beyond their original scope by participating in slum-upgrading efforts (Yitbarek 2008) and other development activities like extending support to the homeless (ibid.: 189). The independence and flexibility of these neighbourhood associations, which fund themselves via membership fees, are valuable for urban development. Already, many NGOs cooperate with *idir* associations, for example, to fight against the prevalence of HIV/AIDS. Still, most of these efforts are very local and isolated and there is no tradition of wide-spread cooperation among different associations. A more-centralised approach could deprive them of their flexibility. Some first horizontal networks are experimenting with upgrading efforts on a larger scale (Yitbarek 2008: 189), but they are always dependent on political will, institutional organisation, and financial support.

The fact that Addis Ababa manages to be an attractive and interesting city despite its complex history can be attributed partly to the periods before and after the Italian occupation (Mehretu and Gebre-Egziabher 2013: 293). The city was always a beacon of modernisation within the country, and the long lack of adequate master plans and land regulations resulted in a very diverse, bottom-up, and often beautiful traditional architecture.

# Low Cost at a High Price

## Financial, Spatial and Social Inclusion Challenged by Individual Home-Ownership and Standardised Housing Blocks

Sascha Delz

### Niedrigkosten zum hohen Preis – privates Hauseigentum und standardisierte Wohnblöcke als Hindernisse für eine Überwindung der sozialräumlichen und finanziellen Ungleichheiten

*Vor dem Hintergrund einer langanhaltenden Wohnungsnot, einer schnell wachsenden urbanen Bevölkerung und einer weitgehenden Verwahrlosung der bestehenden Bausubstanz startete die äthiopische Regierung zu Beginn des neuen Jahrtausends das bisher größte soziale Wohnungsbauprojekt des Landes. Das «Integrated Housing Development Programme» (IHDP) wurde in Zusammenarbeit mit der Deutschen Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit (GTZ – heute Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit GIZ) konzipiert und sollte nicht nur der einkommensschwachen Bevölkerung adäquaten Wohnraum zur Verfügung stellen, sondern gleichzeitig Addis Abebas Trend zur Suburbanisierung entgegenwirken. Zwischen 2004 und 2010 wurden von den ursprünglich geplanten 150.000 bis 200.000 Wohneinheiten rund 80.000 Wohnungen gebaut. Während dies im Kontext von Äthiopiens Sozialwohnungsgeschichte ein enormer quantitativer Erfolg ist, hat die Umsetzung des Programms auf qualitativer Ebene eine Vielzahl problematischer Entwicklungen hervorgebracht. Der folgende Text fokussiert auf zwei Grundpfeiler des Wohnungsprogramms – Schaffung von privatem Wohneigentum über Hypotheken und Bau standardisierter Wohnblöcke – und beschreibt, wie die rigide Kombination und Verwendung dieser zwei Prinzipien dazu beigetragen hat, räumliche, finanzielle und soziale Probleme zu verschärfen. Entsprechend wird die Inflexibilität des finanziellen und räumlichen Systems kritisiert und für ein offeneres, kontextspezifischeres Modell für zukünftige Planungsphasen – oder bei neuen Wohnbauprogrammen – plädiert.*

1

On a demographic level, an average annual growth of over 3% has almost doubled the capital's population to approximately 3.4 million from 1990 to 2010.

**Figure 1:** Typical dwelling structures in Addis Ababa.  
Source: Author, 2008

Like many cities in developing and emerging nations, Ethiopia's capital Addis Ababa has experienced massive transformations during the past decades. While demographic factors such as rural-urban migration or general population growth have put Addis Ababa at the top of urban-growth rankings, the city's physical environment has been strongly shaped by the emblematic typology that usually shelters increasing numbers of mainly poor inhabitants in such contexts: the one-storied, mainly self-built, precarious housing unit (UN-Habitat 2008: 169, World Bank 2011).<sup>1</sup> [Figure 1]

Indeed, housing surveys from the early 2000s identified over 95% of the total housing units as single-story shelters, showing substantial deficits regarding sanitation, cooking, and personal hygiene facilities, while almost 60% of the units within the city centre were classified as dilapidated and thus in need of substantial upgrading or total replacement (ORAAMP 2000: 5, ORAAMP 2001: 18). The surveys also identified an existing housing backlog and a future housing demand: by 2000, the city had accumulated a housing backlog of 233,000 units and would be in need of an additional 223,000 housing units by 2010 (ORAAMP 2001: 18, 23). Faced with these issues, the Ethiopian government began to reconsider past and existing housing policies and eventually introduced the country's largest and most ambitious social housing scheme to date: collaborating with the German Technical Cooperation (GTZ), the administration launched the Addis Ababa Grand Housing Programme (AAGHP) in 2004, and extended it to the Integrated Housing Development Programme (IHDP) in 2006.

As the term "integrated" implies, the IHDP's intent was to install both a comprehensive and inclusive system of housing production "that involves a combination of government financing and construction of housing in large and medium-sized cities targeted at middle and low-income households" (FDRE 2006: 163). Mainly setup in Addis Ababa, the IHDP declared ambitious "five-year goals" for the period between 2004 and 2008. Apart from a reduction of so-called slum dwellings by 50%, the programme planned to build 150,000 to 200,000 housing units, create 60,000 jobs, supply the basis for 2000 micro and small enterprises





(MSEs), reorganise the existing training procedures for the domestic construction sector, raise ETB 5 billion (USD 573 million) for initial housing construction, develop 1200 hectares of land, and therefore “build an institutional capacity” that can oversee and implement an annual output of 50,000 housing units in the long run (GTZ et al. 2006: 67-68). The correspondingly developed housing block typologies have since been built all over the city’s territory. [Figure 2]

In order to adequately introduce such an amount of building mass, the housing programme also demanded that the “provision of large-scale housing should focus on conducive housing within conducive neighbourhoods (...)” (GTZ et al. 2006: 54). However, as will be discussed in the following, the objectives to produce conducive neighbourhoods and housing, as well as to provide affordable and adequate shelter for the low-income population, fell short in many instances. In fact, many of the reasons for these deficits can be found at the very core of the IHDP’s conception: driven by a particular notion of cultural development, and built on a rather rigid system of standardised housing blocks and individual home-ownership, the IHDP neglected many essential aspects that could contribute to spatial qualities, social adaptation, and basic economic integration.

### Finance-related challenges

While the IHDP was expected to provide adequate shelter, create job opportunities, and strengthen local businesses,

the “integrated” approach promised a far greater achievement for the whole of society. Seeking comprehensive poverty reduction, the programme should “enable low-income residents to become house owners and thereby ensure fair distribution of income, and create [a] conducive environment for development” (GTZ et al. 2006: 67-68). In other words, the housing scheme based on **individual home-ownership** was conceived as a mechanism that creates a more inclusive urban environment, both on a spatial and a socio-economic level (UN-Habitat 2011: 17).<sup>2</sup> The introduction of individual home-ownership at such a large scale signified a radical departure from long-established habits and practices. Depicting a typical ratio for low-income countries, nearly two-thirds of Addis Ababa’s citizens were still tenants as of 2007 (CSA 2007: 161). Yet, in spite of the manifold reasons that underline such tenancy patterns, the IHDP opted for a system of individually owned condominium units. In doing so, the programme followed the perpetually and globally promoted “*assumption (...) that home-ownership represents the ‘natural’ tenure (...) regardless of economic, social, or cultural context*” (Gilbert 2008: i).

Even though Ethiopia’s land policy does not allow private ownership of land, adopting this tenure system has triggered an overall **privatisation process** of housing property (CSA 2007: 161).<sup>3</sup> In essence, the IHDP creates an “indirect privatisation”: targeting the most precarious, publicly owned housing stock, the housing programme forces dwellers to either acquire the provided private property, or

**2** To allow this envisioned widespread rate of ownership, the government negotiated a financial agreement with the state-owned Commercial Bank of Ethiopia (CBE): by issuing state bonds to the CBE, the government used the received funds to commission local companies to build the housing units in advance. At the same time, the CBE agreed to provide subsidised mortgages to the future unit owners.

**3** According to the 2007 census of the CSA, 61.3% of citizens were living in some form of rental housing, while 32.6% of the units were owner-occupied. By mainly targeting to replace the 23.6% state-owned housing units, a full implementation of the IHDP would theoretically boost home-ownership to over 50%.



**Figure 2:** IHDP sites in Addis Ababa as of 2010. Source: EiABC Master Plan Evaluation – Housing Component, 2010. Colour adjustments by author



▲ **Figure 3:** Building types and typical floor plan for the Bole-Gerji pilot project. Source: Construction Ahead, 2005

to leave their neighbourhood (Yitbarek 2009: 944). By these terms, the programme does not directly evict low-income residents, but – through the imposed model of privatised ownership – indirectly favours middle and upper middle-class citizens who can afford the respective payments.

Related to these processes of privatisation through mortgages, the general **affordability** of condominium units has been one of the most apparent challenges for the originally targeted middle and low-income groups. The beneficiaries' limited budgets have been contested on two main levels: the initial capital needed for the down payment (related to the selling price), and the recurring costs for interest rates and monthly services such as electricity, water, or waste management. Assuming that an individual has won a unit title through the official lottery draw, the financial pressure starts immediately: residents have to claim the condominium and provide their down payment within one month after their win (UN-Habitat 2011: 27). Two surveys – conducted for seven sites of Bole subcity and two sites of Yeka and Kolfe subcities, respectively – come to congruent results, when investigating the source of the beneficiaries' funds: only about 30% of the beneficiaries were able to provide the full amount from their own savings (Abate 2011: 57, Tefera 2011: 52). Aware of the rather narrow budgets of prospective beneficiaries – who might not have enough savings for the initial down payment – the IHDP suggests additional sources of capital. First, it sees potential in housing finance via micro-finance institutions (MFIs). Although "there is not much experience available worldwide on MFIs going into housing finance", it is seen as a valid option, if the MFI product can provide a "stand-alone housing micro-finance service" (Erlbeck and Trosse 2006: 47).

Connected to the mostly unstable income, a further source implied are relatives, because "many city residents are assumed to receive money from family and friends living abroad" (GTZ et al. 2006: 84). The data collected by the two surveys confirm the use of such additional funds: both surveys conclude that external sources account for 67% to 69% of the beneficiaries' financial means. From these numbers, and depending on the different categorisations of capital sources, the surveys identify the ratio of debt-financed sources as between 32% and 46%, respectively.

Again, these numbers are all related to the initial down payment, which means that in the case of these surveys, over 32% of the beneficiaries – presumably from the lowest end of income and savings – get into debt with an additional microcredit to get access to the larger credit, the mortgage, and thus end up with a twofold **indebtedness** (Abate 2011: 56-58, Tefera 2011: 52). In addition to the resulting interest-related payments to the creditors, the beneficiaries are often confronted with higher rates of monthly service costs than they were used to in their previous housing units (UN-Habitat 2011: 40). The combination of these debt-related issues with a fairly limited income has resulted in a rather tight financial setup for the majority of the targeted citizens, or has excluded many households from participating in the housing programme at all.

### Space-related challenges

On an abstract level, these financial restraints have had a direct influence on the spatial performance of the housing programme. Confronted with financial insecurities, many beneficiaries from the low-income group have rented out their units to more affluent citizens – mostly from the middle class. In turn, the unit owners either have never moved out of their original dwelling, or have returned to another precarious housing unit (Gebre-Egziabher 2010, Tefera 2011: 53, UN-Habitat 2011: 38-40). While this development has created partial steady incomes for the new landlords, it has had the opposite effect on both the intended spatial densification and the envisioned improvements of dwelling standards for low-income citizens. If, in such cases, the precarious dwelling and the new condominium site are not in close proximity, this occurrence has not only produced a deflection of initial problems, but has also induced indirect relocation mechanisms as well as segregating effects.

On a more direct level, the model of individual home-ownership has also had a crucial influence on the corresponding housing designs, and, from an architectural as well as urban design perspective, has produced disputable spatial results at the unit, building, neighbourhood, and urban scale. The established mortgage systems' need of a ready-made and **standardised housing unit** as collateral is directly linked to distinct conditions for housing standards



and materiality. In the IHDP's case, the compliance to financial provisions of the mortgage bank has resulted in a housing typology that neither offers any incremental or intermediate stages of construction, nor allows the introduction of alternative material choices. As a social-housing programme, the units are obviously planned within minimal spatial constraints. However, the conception that all units are built with fixed room divisions seems to be a fairly limiting measure. Despite of the potential adaptability that the chosen structural grid could allow, there is no room for the beneficiaries to

configure the units more flexibly; the strict subjection of room numbers to apartment sizes and income groups deploys axiomatic rules on the units' layouts. [Figure 3]

From the architectural perspective, the rectangular, stand-alone buildings create two main distinct conditions: the street facade is fairly sealed on the upper levels but can be opened for commercial uses on the ground floor, while the back facade's open staircases and access balconies create a permeability for immediate outdoor activities. [Figure 4]



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◀ **Figure 4:** Shop fronts, various IHDP sites. Source: Author, 2011



**Figure 5:** Storage, cooking and laundry activities, various IHDP sites. Source: Author, 2011



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As it turns out, these zones are almost completely appropriated by daily undertakings such as laundry, cooking, and drying spices, or are used as improvised storage spaces. Thus, the lack of suitable or well-defined additional areas for such activities contributes to cramped and often non-functional immediate outdoor spaces. [Figure 5]

At the neighbourhood scale, the given housing-block typology stimulates a design strategy that can be called

**compound design.** Due to the resulting lack of spatial integration into the immediate urban environment, this strategy usually creates morphologically and programmatically disconnected "urban islands". [Figure 6] One of the main spatial deficits caused by this circumstance is the large amount of undefined and neglected areas both within the neighbourhoods and at the neighbourhoods' margins. In the context of a city like Addis Ababa, where a substantial amount of social, cultural, and economic



activities take place on the ground floor and street level, this spatial feature clearly misses a crucial opportunity to provide adequate room for such activities. What the compound design strategy entails for the internal arrangement of neighbourhoods can be translated to the urban scale as well. Due to failed strategies to allocate substantial areas within the existing city fabric, a large number of planned units have been merged into peripheral, large-scale sites. Reminding of **satellite towns**, the compound design creates a spatial assemblage of disconnected autonomous neighbourhoods that are often hardly, or poorly, connected to the city centre via public transport. [Figure 7] The IHDP has thus created a situation where not a neighbourhood design defines the volumetric expressions of buildings, squares and streetscapes, but, on the contrary, the arrangement of stand-alone housing blocks determines how the urban design is organised. As a consequence, urban design's potential ability to create, sustain, and induce spatial qualities beyond mere building standards has been strongly contested and has clearly failed the programme's official directive to create "conductive" housing and neighbourhood designs.

### Culture-related challenges

As indicated above, and in addition to the financial issues, the newly applied condominium lifestyle has also been confronted with long-lasting, local living and housing cultures. Similar to the financial difficulties, many of the emerging challenges regarding daily life and activities within the IHDP sites are directly related to the housing and neighbourhood typologies. The described appropriations of outdoor spaces, for instance, are also linked to the residents' general difficulties to adapt to fixed,



multi-storeyed buildings. This is not only based on frequent reservations regarding living at certain heights, but is also due to the crucial daily activities directly related to the ground floor: a part of many households' supplemental income, for example, is the preparation and sale of the traditional *injera* bread – an indispensable part of the daily Ethiopian diet (UN-Habitat 2011: 43). This activity is usually dependent on walk-in customers and thus access to the ground floor. Laundry, still predominantly done by hand, represents another area of adjustment. Formerly done on the ground floor in front of the dwelling, the inhabitants



▲ **Figure 6:** Compound design resulting in urban islands. Source: Author, 2010

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◀ **Figure 7:** Peripheral IHDP satellite towns. Source: Google Earth / Digital Globe, 2014



**Figure 8:** Immediate outdoor space appropriated for cooking, laundry, storage and satellite dishes. Source: Author, 2011



**Figure 9:** Stand-alone housing blocks and neglected outdoor spaces. Source: Author, 2011



have often continued the same custom in the condominium blocks by expanding their laundry activities to the access balconies. Comparably, the provision of classic “modern” kitchens usually falls short of providing a daily living environment needed by most low-income households and has, in this case, resulted in traditional cooking activities on the access balconies. [Figure 8]

Looking at such cultural adaptations and perceptions caused by new living conditions, the housing blocks and neighbourhoods have received mixed reactions from the various inhabitants. While many of the low-income beneficiaries struggle with the shift towards more-fixed apartment layouts and arrangements, members of the middle class seem to embrace a wider set of the IHDP’s provisions. For this demographic group, the condominium units are a substantial step towards a more independent and modern life. A survey on the Bole-Gerji site for example, found that the aspects of home-ownership, safe living environment, access to sanitary facilities, and larger living units are seen as the main improvements (Lohnert and Fein 2006: 122). However, stepping outside of the privatised area of the individual apartments, the management and **maintenance of communal elements** have become a challenging task in many IHDP neighbourhoods. Here, adjustments of living habits are mostly related to the new spatial proximity – which asks for new kinds of neighbourly arrangements – and the emerging need of communal organisation related to maintenance of both the ownership-based condominium blocks and the outdoor spaces. Within this realm, issues of sound emissions by immediate neighbours, disputes about storage spaces, unsystematic waste management, the lack of overall maintenance of housing blocks, and unclear responsibilities regarding communal facilities and open spaces have caused frictions among many inhabitants (Lohnert and

Fein 2006: 120-122, UN-Habitat 2011: 43-44). Thus, apart from the rather visible issues that directly emerge from the housing typology’s spatial configurations, the condominium blocks and neighbourhoods seem to have an intrinsic conceptual deficit regarding communal responsibilities as well. The rigidly implemented version of home-ownership has not been followed or supplemented by a respective organisational and financial structure that would be able to ensure sustainable long-term management of communal and outdoor spaces. [Figure 9] Thus, with no formal obligation for contributing to maintenance, the overall long-term quality of the housing blocks – as well as the neighbourhoods – is more or less dependent on the financial abilities and individual commitments of the given residents.

## Conclusion

At the respectively described stage of the programme, this brief and critical sketch of interrelated financial, spatial, and social challenges indicates that the IHDP has failed to create a comprehensive and more inclusive access to adequate urban housing for the mainly targeted low-income citizens. Moreover, the programme has, in many places, even aggravated prevailing issues by fostering social and spatial segregation. The applied combination of the strongly ideologically framed concept of individual home-ownership – based on a strict financial corset of mortgage finance – and the related design procedures have not only ignored crucial social and economic realities, they have also somewhat paralysed architecture and urban design’s potential abilities to create, sustain, and induce social as well as spatial qualities beyond mere financial directives and construction standards. Yet, in spite of all these side effects that stand in stark contrast to the programme’s initial and official intentions, there has been an undaunted demand for the programme’s condominium units. The immense pressure on both the middle class and low-income housing markets has permitted – and occasionally forced – the government to continually build thousands of housing units since the initial five-year plan, without fundamentally questioning the key framework of the IHDP (UN-Habitat 2011: 26). Although there is the obvious success of producing housing units at an unprecedented pace, this should not be an excuse to refrain from critically and openly re-examining the housing programme’s main conceptions. For the city as a whole, such a re-evaluation could be of great importance: whereas the IHDP’s quantitative achievements might resolve some of the immediate housing needs, in the long run the qualitative aspects will strongly determine whether Addis Ababa develops towards a spatially, financially, and ultimately socially sustainable urban centre. Reflecting on the aforementioned observations, such a process of critically engaging Addis Ababa’s housing challenge would obviously have to begin with considering an array of alternative, more contextually driven and more inclusive organisational models, financing schemes, and design approaches. A collection of more versatile, adaptable, and affordable housing schemes, for instance, would not only automatically expand the margins for the initially aspired social and spatial inclusion of low-income citizens. Rather than emulating existing models from the past, it could also spur a new generation of innovative, context-based approaches to adequate and affordable housing.



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# Condominium Housing in Addis Ababa – Challenges of a New Type of Accommodation

Monika Wiebusch\*

## Das Eigentumswohnungsprogramm in Addis Abeba – Herausforderungen aus einem neuen Wohnkonzept

Ab 1999 arbeitete die Stadtverwaltung Addis Ababa an einem ambitionierten Wohnungsbauprogramm, das später von der nationalen Regierung auf das ganze Land ausgeweitet wurde. Hintergrund war der eklatante Wohnungsmangel in allen Städten. Bereits zu Beginn wurde entschieden, dabei ausschließlich auf Eigentumswohnungen zu setzen und keine Mietwohnungen zu errichten. Ziel war es, in der Stadt lebenden Familien mit niedrigen Einkommen zu Eigentum zu verhelfen und ihnen so eine Verbesserung ihrer Lebensverhältnisse zu ermöglichen. Der Artikel zeigt, vor welchem Hintergrund die Entscheidung für ein Eigentumsprogramm getroffen wurde und welche Herausforderungen sich aus der Wahl eines für Äthiopien neuen Wohnmodells ergaben. Fehlende Erfahrungen mit großen Wohneigentumsanlagen und eine Gesetzgebung zu Wohnungseigentum, die parallel zur Realisierung des Wohnungsbauprogramms erst erarbeitet werden musste, sind nur zwei dieser Herausforderungen. Insbesondere die rechtlichen und administrativen Aspekte waren neu und unklar: Was unterscheidet das „Condominium“ von einem „normalen“ Wohnhaus? Welche legalen und administrativen Schritte sind erforderlich? Wer ist dafür verantwortlich? Welche Rechte und Pflichten haben die neuen Eigentümer\*innen und wie organisieren sie sich? Dazu kommen die Herausforderungen dadurch, dass das in Äthiopien traditionell „erdgebundene“ Wohnen, mit Hausschlachtung im Hof, dem Stoßen statt Mahlen von Kaffee, Wäschewaschen und kollektivem Kochen jetzt „auf die Etage“ verlagert werden muss und alle sich in ihrem privatesten Bereich mit anderen organisatorisch und administrativ verständigen und einigen müssen.

## Background

This article focuses on one crucial aspect of the Integrated Housing Development Programme (IHDP): “condominiums”, the ownership model provided by the programme. This article tries to answer the question of why the government decided to implement the programme as an ownership programme only, instead of maintaining the rental housing system that had been established by the Derg regime for the *kebele*<sup>1</sup> houses. It addresses the first phase of IHDP implementation from 2005 to 2010. The intention is to show how “condominiums” as “new” legal objects can affect the legal system as a whole and in various connected fields: land law, housing customs, and social interaction.

Since 2010, the city administration and the owners’ associations have probably solved many of the resulting problems. Unfortunately, it is not easy to get reliable information on urban development topics in the current situation: the spatial urban development of Addis Ababa (into the Oromia region) is one of the reasons for the current political unrest in Ethiopia, and it is difficult to find partners interested in openly discussing this topic.

## The *kebele* housing system

The socialist government of Mengistu Haile Mariam (1977–1991) nationalised all private land and most private buildings. As in accordance to Proclamation No 47/1975, “Government Ownership of Urban Lands and Extra Houses” (The Provisional Military Administrative Council of Ethiopia 1975), house-owners

could keep one house for themselves (the land was on leasehold), but all other houses were nationalised. Thus, many of the houses were changed to “communal” houses and handed over to people at a low rent. Most of the houses were administered by the *kebele* (neighbourhood) administration, the lowest government administration level of the city. During this time, ca. 60% of the Addis Ababa housing stock was rental, 93% of which was under *kebele* administration (UN-Habitat 2011b: 2).

In return for the low rents, the responsible authorities did not invest in the houses, while the dwellers had neither the skills nor the necessary financial means nor the permission to do anything. The houses, most of them without even water and sanitation, were soon overcrowded and became dilapidated.

At the end of the socialist regime, when the Ethiopian People’s Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF) took over in 1991, Addis Ababa had only a very small stock of reasonable housing. The freedom of movement established by the new government also initiated a relevant influx from the rural areas and aggravated the situation: this was hard for all inhabitants and disastrous for the poor.

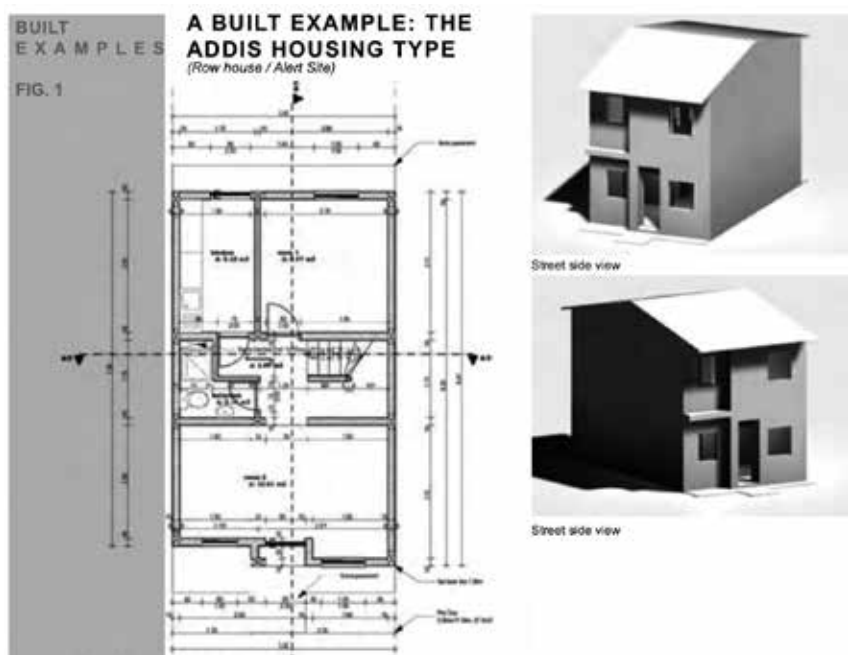
The *kebele* housing system was taken over by the new government. The Addis Ababa Housing Agency, a department of the Addis Ababa city administration, tried to improve the administrative capacities of the *kebele* administrations through support and training, but as rehabilitation was not budgeted for, the poor situation of the rented *kebele* houses stayed almost the same.

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The author was project manager of the Addis Ababa component in the Ethio-German “Urban Governance and Decentralisation Programme” from 2007–09. The team supported the Addis Ababa Housing Development Project Office (HDPO) in “handing over” the condominiums to owners’ associations and likewise supported the associations to get operational. This included training material and training for the associations concerning a variety of topics: administration of owners’ associations; handling of technical devices as electricity, prepaid meters, drainage, water and waste water; and rights and responsibilities of associations, owners and tenants.

1

A *kebele* is the smallest administrative unit of Ethiopia, similar to a ward or neighbourhood, and is in turn part of a *woreda* (district).



**Figure 1:** G+1 (ground floor + 1) low-cost terraced houses. Source: Ethiopian Ministry of Federal Affairs / GTZ (2003: 8)

### Approaches to a new housing policy

The Ethio-German Development Cooperation started a low-cost housing project in 1999 with the Ethiopian Ministry of Federal Affairs and various regional and local governments. The GTZ (today GIZ, *Gesellschaft für internationale Zusammenarbeit*) elaborated a concept with the objective “to enable low-income urban dwellers ... to acquire homes of their own to improve their living conditions” (Ethiopian Ministry of Federal Affairs / GTZ 2003: 4). [Figure 1] While the first housing concepts were G+1 (ground floor + 1) terraced starter houses with “growing” opportunities, the concept already addressed the need of higher densities, e.g., apartment houses with up to G+4 (Ethiopian Ministry of Federal Affairs / GTZ 2003: 6), while the ownership concept was never questioned.

When Arkebe Oqubay became Addis Ababa’s mayor in 2003, he addressed the housing challenge more systematically. He established the Grand Addis Ababa Housing Programme (named “Addis Ababa Integrated Housing Programme” in some documents), a pilot of the low-cost housing project that was started in the suburb of Bole and implemented by the GTZ. [Figure 2] The pilot consisted of G+2 and G+3 apartment buildings, and an even higher business block. [Figure 3]

Parallel to the low-cost housing pilot project, the Addis Ababa Master Plan was elaborated in 2000/2001 by the Addis Ababa city government’s Office for the Revision of the Addis Ababa Master Plan (Addis Ababa City Government – OORAMP 2002). During the process of elaboration, various options to support housing for the poor were intensively discussed (Körner 2009). The suggestions of the Master Plan team (supported by the German and French development cooperations) suggested the elaboration of a set of different approaches with different stakeholders, the low-cost housing strategy being one among others, including in-situ rehabilitation and cooperative approaches, which have a good tradition in Ethiopia (UN Habitat 2011b: 5). Various NGOs active in Addis Ababa during this time wanted to support projects of that kind. The Master Plan also recommended different levels of priorities for the planned restructuring and upgrading of the inner city. Housing areas without priority should be improved in situ with necessary infrastructure (electricity / water / toilets). A World Bank

programme for basic infrastructure (joint water pipes and toilets, pavement of access roads) had already been implemented in various inner-city quarters (Addis Ababa City Government – OORAMP 2002: 45ff.).

At the end of this discussion between the city and state governments and various development partners,<sup>2</sup> the city government decided for the low-cost housing programme as the only kind of state-subsidised housing. Neither NGOs nor co-operatives were given further support.

The documents for the low-cost housing programme give no reasons for why the programme was implemented as an ownership programme (condominiums) only: the building and construction type (multilevel apartments) would have also been suitable for rental housing.

The reasons for deciding for an ownership programme without further (visible) discussion are – nevertheless – at hand:

- Low-cost housing concepts in other (African) states hardly existed at all, except in South Africa, where they consisted of ownership models only (at least at that time – see the article by Beate Lohnert in this issue of TRIALOG, p. 40-47).
- The reputation of *kebele* houses and their administration was conceivably poor. The concept had been started during the Derg regime and had never been implemented reasonably: it had always been characterised by reluctant and financially overstrained administrations, and by inhabitants having few rights and opportunities to care for the houses themselves. The houses were old and many of them beyond repair.
- The global political framework should be considered: in the 1990s, the Soviet Union collapsed. In all post-socialist countries, privatisation of former state-owned housing was one of the first activities of the new freedom (often against the advice of experts). Interpreting the right to housing as the right to private housing ownership was no longer the position of the western development partners alone: it had become the “credo” of the redevelopment in post-socialist countries, too. Improving upon the insufficient rental housing system that was a relic of the socialist Derg regime may probably have been one aim of the EPRDF when deciding for an owner-centred development.
- In 2003, the objective of the low-cost housing pilot project was “to enable low-income urban dwellers – with special attention to female-headed households – to acquire homes of their own in order to improve their living conditions.” (Ethiopian Ministry of Federal Affairs / GTZ 2003: 4) It was always part of the government’s strategy to provide property that the dwellers could use according to their own interest: to rent or live in themselves, and be able to sell after some years.
- In addition, important international development partners (e.g., the World Bank) have a generally positive perception of private house ownership, and even expected additional potential benefits (from the housing programme) by privatising the rented *kebele* houses (The World Bank 2009: 5). The UN-Habitat publication *A Policy Guide to Rental Housing in Developing Countries* (UN-Habitat 2011a: 12) gives various reasons why, on the one hand, only public rental housing is suitable for poor people and why, on the other



hand, most governments no longer (or never did) build for rent. UN-Habitat also stressed the positive results of the ownership programme: "Thus the IHDP is ... a wealth-generation programme for low-income households. Among other benefits, ownership of a condominium property can be used as collateral to enable the owner to borrow money in the future for investment." (UN-Habitat 2011b: 47)

- The Ethiopian government launched an "integrated programme" addressing not only the construction of houses but the construction sector as a whole, with more than 300,000 houses in five years in Addis Ababa alone. The programme was planned to be a purely state investment. During the first years, the Addis Ababa housing programme accounted for up to 2/3 of the city's investment budget (Addis Ababa City Administration 2004/2006). It was obvious that this investment needed refinancing. Thus, the idea of a revolving fund (reflux of investment through the sale of apartments) arose. A rental housing model would have been much more expensive for city and state.

While a few NGOs supported single-cooperative and in-situ rehabilitation projects,<sup>3</sup> there were no assertive supporters of mass rental-housing concepts among the advisors at that time, or at least they did not find recognition. In consequence, or from their own perception, the Addis Ababa city government and later the Ethiopian government were clearly focussed towards an owner-oriented concept.

The manager of the Addis Ababa Housing Development Project Office (AAHDPO) stated in 2006: "The IHDP has been designed with a long-term objective of ... empowering citizens ... through ownership of houses and ensure tenure security ..." (Ministry of Works and Urban Development / Addis Ababa City Government 2006: 10). The – even temporary – improvement of poor, inner-city housing areas did not coincide with the national and/or municipal governments' perception of a "modern capital of Africa". This perception may also have been fostered by UN-Habitat still defining up to 80% of Addis Ababa as "slums" in 2008 (UN-Habitat – Regional and Technical Cooperation Division 2008: 21) and 2011 (UN-Habitat 2011b: 5).

### From "house" to "condominium"

The units in the apartment blocks were sold as "condominiums", a new type of dwelling in Ethiopia. The challenges for the inhabitants caused by "living on an upper floor" have already been described in other articles. The structure of the Ethiopian condominium law (of the Democratic Republic of Ethiopia 2003) was adopted from the US condominium law, leaving most of the definitions (e.g., what is common and what is separate property) to the individual owners and their associations.

Besides this, the legal construction of a "condominium" challenges the constructor, the vendor, the purchaser and the authorities. Figure 4 shows the multitude of steps necessary to transform a "simple new construction" into "condominiums" and to use it thusly.

The steps are codified in the Ethiopian condominium law (of The Democratic Republic of Ethiopia 2003) and in the Addis Ababa condominium regulations (Addis Ababa City Government 2004). Nevertheless: not all organisational and legal preconditions were fulfilled and operational when the housing programme started – nor by 2010. [Figure 4]



### Constructing a house

The low-cost housing projects in Addis Ababa were all carried out by the Housing Development Project Office (HDPO), owned by the Addis Ababa city administration. They only used land at the disposition of the city administration for the projects. The city administration provided the land for the public housing projects for free. A formal transfer of land rights,<sup>4</sup> from the Addis Ababa city administration to the HDPO and from them to the individual owners respective their associations, was not documented and traceable. In fact: the sales contracts did not include any information about a plot belonging to the purchased condominium.

Borders between the given construction site and public land were usually not defined. In large projects, the various apartment blocks were constructed on the undivided plot (defined only by the adjoining roads) without a defined and dedicated plot for the different apartment blocks.

While the HDPO was responsible for the construction on the plot, the Addis Ababa city administration (Construction Department) was responsible for the external infrastructure

▲  
**Figure 2:** Pilot project Bole Gerji I. Source: M. Wiebusch 2008

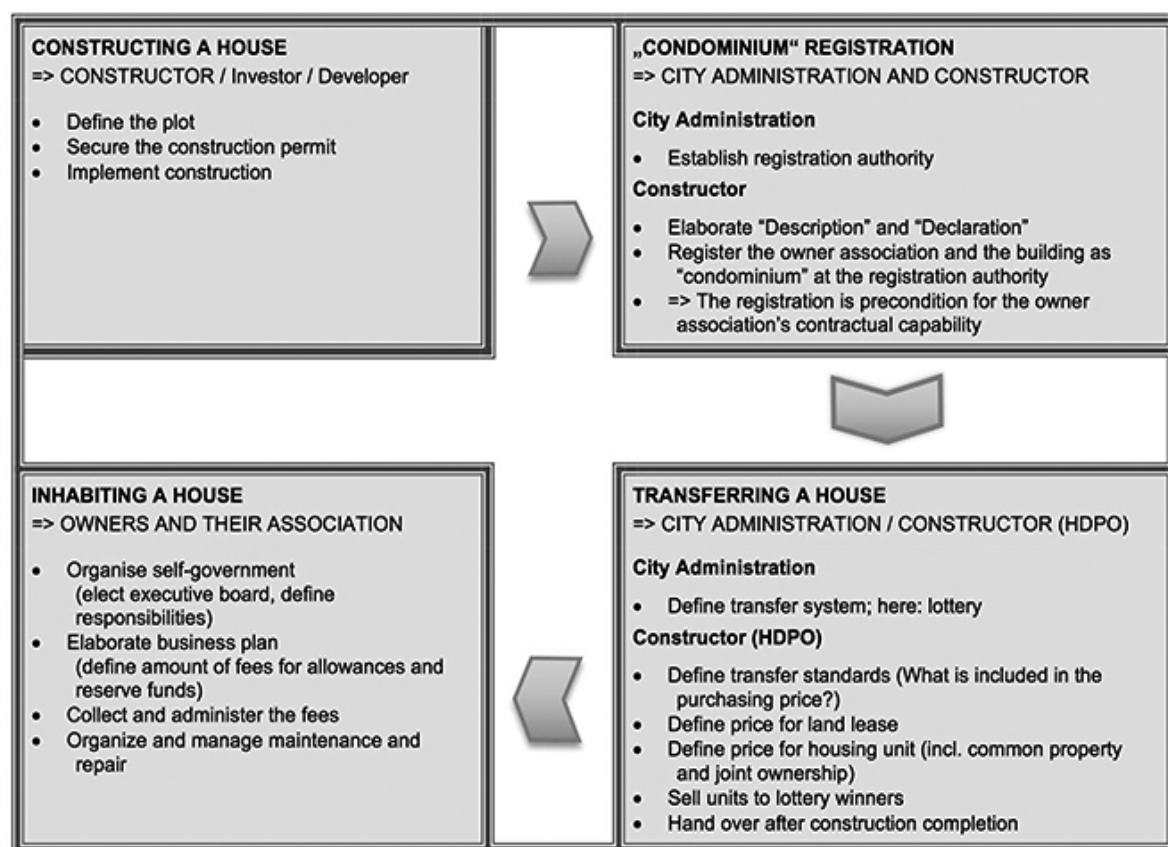
**3**  
E.g., the NGO "Integrated Holistic Approach – Urban Development Project" (IHA-UDP).

**4**  
As land in Ethiopia is public property, there is no transfer of land ownership but a leasehold contract.

**Figure 3:** Layout of the pilot project in surrounding neighbourhood. Source: Google Earth 2016  
▼



**Figure 4:** From “house” to “condominium”. Source: M. Wiebusch



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(access roads, water supply, connection to the wastewater system [where possible]). As the Construction Department did not provide the necessary capacities, the HDPO (politically under pressure for results) often stepped in for the external infrastructure – without arranging a clear reimbursement of cost. (This was yet another reason for the straining of the available budget.)

In consequence, neither the cost of the projects could be clearly determined nor did the new owners know what in fact they had purchased.

## Registration of condominiums

The Ethiopian condominium law requires the formal registration of condominiums at the registration authority based on two documents.

The “description” includes the construction plans, which show and define the outline of the single units (individual property), the common built property (staircases, halls, corridors), and the common (or individual) land/plot property (open space, parking lots, joint or individual gardens, etc.). In addition, the description includes a definition of the individual shares in relation to the whole property. The “declaration” is the charter, which defines the rights and duties of the owners’ association and single owners (use of property, fees, reserve funds, etc.).

Both documents require the approval of the registration authority. Only through registration does the association receive contractual and legal capacity. The law (implicitly) requests that the constructor elaborate the description and declaration and register the condominiums before selling the units – a practice common in other countries more familiar with condominiums. The HDPO – perhaps not familiar with “open” laws like this – did not (or did not want to) see those needs.

And in fact, the situation in Addis Ababa was even more complicated: the first low-cost housing pilot project in Bole Gerji (see above) started implementation in 2003; the condominium law became effective in only 2004.

The HDPO started the low-cost housing project like any other construction project, with the “usual” plans for construction permits only. They did not pay attention to the condominium-specific documents. This may have been justified in the first projects, but it went on until at least 2010. The HDPO decided to leave the whole “registration” process to the owners’ associations, so as a consequence the sales contracts for the individual owners only showed the given individual apartment – but gave no further information about the common property and no information about the rights and responsibilities of the individual owners.

In addition, the Addis Ababa city administration did not establish the registration authority until at least January 2010: the various involved departments did not come to an agreement about responsibilities. The Addis Ababa Land Administration Authority, defined in the condominium law for this task, only issued so called “title deeds” (certificates of ownership) for the individual units – without considering joint property and land-use titles and without verification whether the sum of all single ownership titles added up to 100%! They refused the registration of owners’ associations as being beyond their responsibility. The Addis Ababa Bureau of Trade and Industry, another department of the city administration responsible for the registration of commercial and social associations and cooperatives, also refused the registration of owners’ associations. They argued that the Ethiopian law had no legal basis for this kind of association as the law was derived from the US condominium law.

It seems strange that even though the housing programme was the city government’s most important investment and political project, nobody in the city government saw the



necessity to solve the niggling conflicts of competence in the city administration. This may also show the hidden challenges of taking laws from foreign systems without considering the “logic” of the system.

This indicates one of the challenges of Ethiopian development: Ethiopia was never colonised. Besides all the positive aspects of this fact, this goes along with the need of developing a new and own legal system. The Ethiopian government did this, proud and self-assured, taking “the best from all the world’s systems” – unfortunately the bits did not always fit together.

In consequence, although almost 80,000 condominiums were handed over to their owners in Addis Ababa at the beginning of 2010, no opportunity for a legal registration was in sight. Thus, the owners had no legally registered associations. If they founded provisional ones, the associations had no legal entity, no possibility of concluding contracts or committing the owners to pay fees and reserve funds – and no possibility of claiming warranties! Due to the reluctance of the HDPO, the owners even lacked the basic documents for the calculation and determination of fees (depending on the individual shares). They had neither documents nor rights to define the basics of condominium management and administration.

### Transferring a condominium to the owner

In accordance to the law, the object of purchase should be clearly defined in the “description”: the individually held property and the share of the common property. Nevertheless, there was no “description”. The purchase was transacted based on documents describing the purchased unit, without giving information about the associated common property.

The transfer standards were not clearly defined. This was especially important for the open space around the houses: there was no agreement on how the areas not covered by construction should be handed over.

To allow an as fast as possible move-in for the long-waiting owners, the transfer was often carried out while the finishing work was still ongoing. Often, access roads or pathways to the houses were not completed for the sake of other, waiting construction sites. In some cases, building site equipment, containers, and construction waste were left behind, impossible for the new inhabitants to remove. [Figure 5]

The pricing of the units included social aspects, too: small units (originally meant to serve very poor purchasers and single women with children) were cross-subsidised by larger units; costs for infrastructure (internal and external) were only partly included in the purchase price. At least in the first projects, leasehold costs were not included, as the land had been transferred from city administration to the HDPO free of charge. Houses in excellent inner-city locations were sold at the same price as projects in the outskirts.

Different kinds of subsidies for smaller units (for single-headed families, especially poor dwellers) – instead of defining them financially – were integrated into the purchase price: thus, the price did not at all reflect the unit’s real share in the project. What was meant to reflect social compensation in the purchase price resulted in a situation where the documented share could hardly be used as a reference for fees, reserve



funds, cost allocation, etc. as this would result in a permanent disadvantage for the larger units.

### Inhabiting a condominium

The condominiums were distributed through a lottery system, as the administration decided it to be the most just and fair distribution mode, considering the immense demand. Due to this system, the new inhabitants usually did not know one another, while their social contacts in the former settlements were destroyed. In their new home, the legal requirements for establishment and management of an owners’ association were not yet in place (see above).

Nevertheless, most of the projects managed to implement provisional structures within a reasonable timeframe. They were aligned to the traditional Ethiopian “*idirs*”, associations responsible for the organisation of wakes and funerals. They collect the money for funeral ceremonies in the community and function as an insurance association. They are traditionally established, and their leaders are highly regarded socially. Comparable structures could quickly be established in the

▲ **Figure 5:** Bole Gerji V, Private “gardens” with remains of building site equipment. Source: M. Wiebusch 2009

### References (cont.)

- UN-Habitat (2011a) *A Policy Guide to Rental Housing in Developing Countries*. Nairobi, Kenya.
- UN-Habitat (2011b) *Condominium Housing in Ethiopia – The Integrated Housing Development Programme*. Nairobi, Kenya.

▼ **Figure 6:** Wastewater from a hairdresser led into the rainwater drainage, Bole Gerji V. Source: M. Wiebusch 2009





▲  
**Figure 7:** Communal house, Yeka site. Source: M. Wiebusch 2008

new condominium blocks. These associations also collected the fees for the provisional administration of the condominium sites.

Nevertheless, the payment was voluntary, and as the membership in the owners' association was not clearly defined, it had to be established through the registration. Many of the units were rented out by their owners, who either shared the unit with their tenants or stayed in their former shacks. The provisional associations rarely made distinctions between owners and tenants, neither concerning responsibilities nor concerning payments. Due to the generally reduced financial solvency of many owners/tenants, the revenues were hardly sufficient for adequate maintenance. The necessity of establishing a reserve fund was not addressed at all during the early inhabitation in the condominiums. The responsibilities for maintenance and repair of the common property were as unclear as the rights and duties of the individual unit owners. This resulted in business and commercial use on the upper floors, as well as congested discharge pipes and rainwater ditches due to misuse. [Figure 6]

In his article in this issue of TRIALOG, Sascha Delz addresses the cultural challenges for traditional Ethiopian families used to grinding their coffee, slaughtering their sheep and chicken, and preparing elaborate and spicy meals within a larger community. All this was no longer possible in the upstairs apartments. To enable these traditional activities, communal houses were established as part of the condominium developments. They included facilities for washing, cooking, slaughtering on the ground floor, and – if there was a second floor – meeting and office facilities (e.g., for the owners' associations). [Figure 7]

Nevertheless, the financing and ownership was unclear. The purchase prices for units did not include any hints concerning the communal houses. But as the purchase documents also did not include any notice about the obvious "common property" (e.g., staircases, corridors and roofs), the communal houses could simply be taken as another part of the common property – now at the disposition of the condominium owners. The HDPO, on the other hand, soon realised that this would stress their overstrained budget even more and decided to sell or rent the communal houses out.

This decision resulted in heavy protest, as the facilities were dearly needed by the communities that had no additional money left for rent or purchase. Many communal houses in the poor communities thus stayed unused, even though especially the poor inhabitants tended to be the more traditional and thus more dependent on those facilities.

Taking this development as proof that the communal houses were no longer needed by the condominium owners, the HDPO reduced their number in the following given site's development (e.g., Mickey Leland and Bole Summit).

In the longer run, some of the communal houses were rented or purchased by the owners' associations for joint use and maintenance purposes. Where this did not materialise, the HDPO sold some to private enterprises. This sometimes resulted in a reasonable mixed use, but sometimes it resulted in reasonable conflicts: the communal houses usually had no adequate access and related open space for business use.

## Outlook

Beyond dispute, the housing need in Addis Ababa is tremendous and will remain like this for a long time. Also beyond dispute, the traditional 1-2 level structures will not meet the requirements of urban development in an international metropolis. And there is no doubt that a large target group will be well served by the new condominium constructions.

Many younger people, educated and with a job, will find this alternative to the traditional, tight and narrow family structures appealing. Surveys in the pilot project have proved a high acceptance and high consumer satisfaction (Lohnert and Fein 2007).

It is an ambitious programme, with high expectations on social and economic effects. It has produced jobs in the construction sector and has recognisably increased the technical and mechanical skills of the labour force, even if not all SMEs (small and micro enterprises) managed to succeed on their way to self-employment. Even if not all the 200,000 units planned for the 2005-2010 programme phase could be realised in time, the 120,000 completed units have relevantly contributed to the housing supply in Addis Ababa.

As often: the devil hides in details. It looks as if the city administration and government (and their national and international advisors) did not foresee the programme's complexity. The abdication of a defined target group, the decision to fund only the low-cost housing concept and no other approaches, the lack of experience of all stakeholders concerning the topic of "condominiums": all this led to basic shortcomings in the programme, producing more and more difficulties in the course of implementation.

Political pressure to decide for quantity rather than quality, and to ignore the awareness that relevant issues – social, legal, and concerning construction – has not been considered: all this is known from developed countries as well.

The various projects will need time to prove whether they grow fit for habitation and living – or whether they become the new "slums" due to their structural or social shortcomings.

The strong Ethiopian ability to adapt and organise in adverse situations and arrange in new surroundings will surely support this process.



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# A Failed Journey: An Integrated Master Plan of Addis Ababa and the Surrounding Oromia Regional Government Towns in Ethiopia

Melaku Tanku

## Der integrierte Masterplan für Addis Abeba und die benachbarten Städte im Regionalstaat Oromia – vom Scheitern eines Prozesses

*Es geht hier um den gescheiterten Versuch zur Erstellung eines Integrierten Masterplans für Addis Abeba und die benachbarten, sozial, ökonomisch und infrastrukturell eng mit der Hauptstadt verknüpften Städte im Regionalstaat Oromia. Der Plan sollte ursprünglich von der Verwaltung des Stadtstaats Addis Ababa und der Regionalverwaltung von Oromia von 2012 bis 2017 zusammen entwickelt und dann im Lauf der folgenden 10 bis 25 Jahre gemeinsam umgesetzt werden. Dazu gab es eine sehr breite und sehr kontroverse Diskussion, bei der an diesem Plan meist kein gutes Haar gelassen wurde, eine Polemik, die sich nicht so sehr an den Inhalten sondern mehr an formalen Aspekten entzündete. Der Prozess endete ergebnislos. Schuld an diesem Scheitern waren ein Mangel an öffentlicher Diskussion im Vorfeld, die Unklarheit über die Ziele dieser Planung, die ungeklärten Rechte des Regionalstaats Oromia gegenüber Addis Abeba sowie das Fehlen eines klar vorgegebenen institutionellen Rahmens. Nach einem kurzen Überblick über Addis Abeba und die benachbarten Städte sowie einem Rückblick auf die Planungsgeschichte der äthiopischen Metropole stellt der Artikel die institutionellen, politischen und kulturellen Begleitumstände dar, die zum Misserfolg dieses Projekts geführt haben. Am Ende werden Teile der öffentlichen Debatte über den Masterplan dokumentiert. Dabei wird festgestellt, dass es fast unmöglich ist, alle politischen Ränke im Kontext dieser kontroversen Diskussion zu erfassen, so dass die Ursache des Scheiterns nur auf der Basis persönlicher Erfahrung diskutiert werden kann, mit der Absicht, die selben Fehler zukünftig nicht noch einmal zu machen.*

## Background: Addis Ababa and its surrounding towns

Addis Ababa is the capital and largest city of Ethiopia. It is the country's commercial, political, administrative and cultural hub. The city is situated in the central part of the country and has a compact shape encircled by five small Oromia regional state towns. The governance structure of the city consists of a three tiers administration: 1. City (central), 2. Subcities with significant responsibilities regarding municipal and non-municipal services (currently there are 10), and 3. *Woreda* (districts) (currently there are 116). Addis Ababa is a chartered city on the level of a regional state. There are five neighbouring towns – namely: Sululta, Burayu, Gelan/Dukem, Sebeta and Legetafo/Legedadi – which are administered by the Oromia regional state. Yet Addis Ababa and these towns are in different urban-development stages. Addis Ababa has strong interdependencies/linkages with these Oromia towns in terms of social, environmental and economic aspects as well as infrastructure. The municipal boundary of Addis Ababa is estimated to enclose a total area of 520 km<sup>2</sup>/52,000 hectare,<sup>1</sup> at an altitude of about 2,400 metres above sea level and on a built-up area of some 290 square kilometres. The city hosts the headquarters of the UN Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), the African Union (AU), and a large number of embassies, consulates and other international organisations. From this point of view, Addis Ababa is the diplomatic capital of Africa (UN-Habitat 2007).

Some sources, such as the World Bank (2016), note that due to an annual urban population growth of 4.89%, Ethiopia's

urban population is expected to triple by 2037. The widely used government official source, the Central Statistics Agency (CSA), estimates the city population at 3.2 million with an urbanisation rate of 3.8% per annum (CSA 2015).<sup>2</sup> The city accounts for around 5% of the total population of Ethiopia,<sup>3</sup> and for about 22% of the national urban population. Addis Ababa has been a primate city in the country for a long time, the primacy index being nearly 10 times larger than the second largest city in Ethiopia (Mekelle). It has linkages with the surrounding Oromia regional state and major cities in the country. However, Addis Ababa and the surrounding towns make up 77 percent of the total urban population (AASOIDPPO 2013). This indicates that these spaces are more urbanised than the other parts of the country.

Addis Ababa, a relatively young city of 132 years, is growing at a very fast rate and strengthening its presence within the regional arena. However, the fast urban growth in Addis Ababa is not confined only to the administrative boundary of the city. It has also induced a population growth in the towns surrounding the city. These are mainly Burayu (89,057 inhabitants), Gelan (32,000), Dukem (25,000), Legetafo/Legedadi (9,237), Sebeta (79,722), and Sululta (10,563). These spatial units are located, respectively, at 15 km, 25 km, 37 km, 20 km, 25 km and 15 km at the west, south, south, northeast, southwest, and north of the capital (AASOIDPPO 2013). The towns belong to the Oromia regional state, which is by far the biggest regional state in Ethiopia and shares boundaries with all other regional states<sup>4</sup> except Tigray. According to the CSA, in 2007 the total population of the Oromia region was 27,158,471 (CSA 2007). It has a total area of 363,399.8 km<sup>2</sup>,

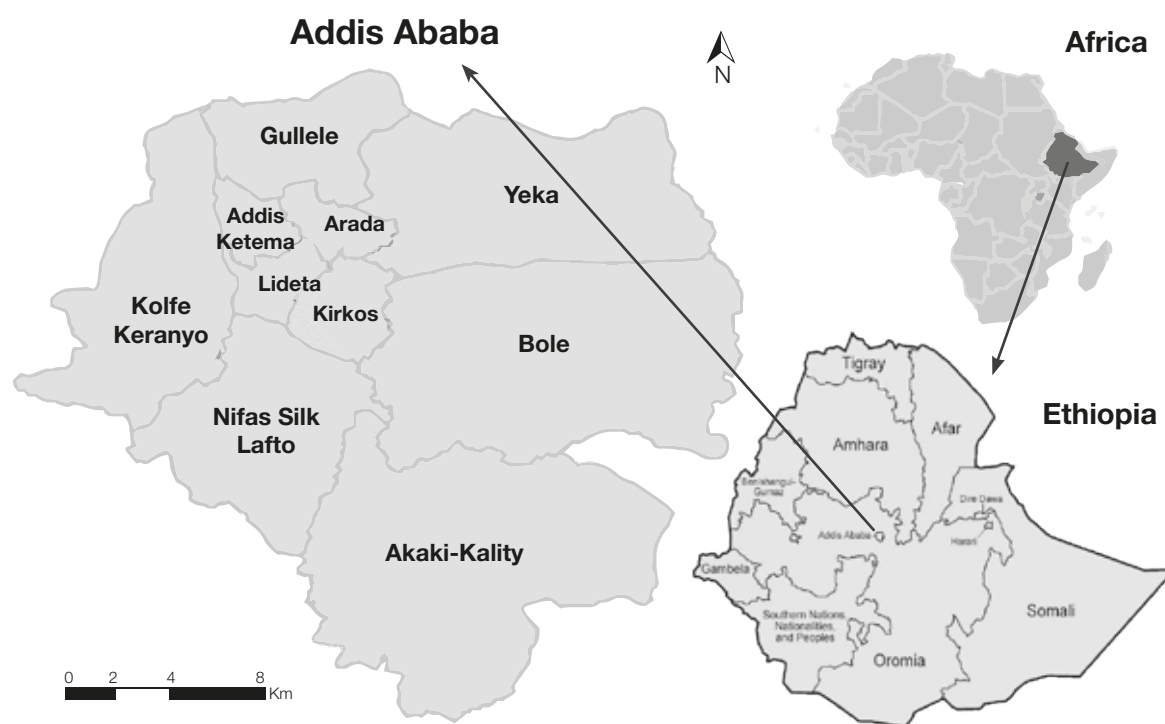
**1** Some sources (FP7 2010, Mahiteme 2007, ORAAMP 2002) say that the city covers a total of 54,000 hectares (540 km<sup>2</sup>).

**2** It is not an easy task to get precise and reliable data about the city population. Hence, estimations of the city population differ across institutions and are very dynamic. All other institutions, however, estimate figures higher than that estimated by the CSA.

**3** The most recent report of UN-Habitat (2017) estimated the country's population as 99.4 million.

**4** The country is a federal republic with three levels of governance: federal, regional, and *woreda* (city/municipal). There are nine semi-autonomous administrative regions in the country, and they have the power to raise and spend their own revenue. Each region established its own constitution, and administration responsibilities were handed over to the municipalities. The central government continued to support city development by producing manuals to guide city and local planning.

**Figure 1:** Relative location of Addis Ababa with its 10 sub-cities. Source: Addis Ababa City Master Plan Project Office (AACMPPO)



which accounts for 34.5 percent of the total area of the country. There are many people commuting everyday to work, buy, and/or sell something from/to Addis Ababa. The relationship of these areas with each other and with Addis Ababa has proved that the political and/or administrative boundaries are less strong than the stronger socio-economic ties between/ among them. In general, Addis Ababa today is a bustling metropolis located almost at the geographic centre of the country. By virtue of its population size, political power, economic activity and social service facilities, the city is a primate city. [Figure 1] Of course, its political history and the agglomeration of economies and geographical advantages helped it to gain this status.

### A short retrospective of Addis Ababa's urban planning

Addis Ababa was established in 1886 by Emperor Menelik and his wife Taitu. It has experienced several planning changes that have influenced its physical and socio-economic growth in a considerable way (ORAAMP 2002). The first "organic master plan"<sup>5</sup> was the land-use plan of Etege Tayitu in 1986. It is hardly possible to be called a plan. Cognizant of this fact, the establishment and growth of Addis Abba has been debated in terms of whether to describe it as a spontaneous settlement or as the outcome of careful planning (Yergalem 2007). Three important factors – namely: the introduction of eucalyptus trees, the proclamation in 1907 of legalising private ownership of land, and the completion of the Addis Ababa to Djibuti railway line in 1917 – saved the capital from relocation (UN-Habitat 2007). There was no planning guidance till 1936, when Le Corbusier made the first guiding sketch for Addis Ababa, which had no consequences for the city. In the same year, two Italians, I. Guidi & C. Valle, prepared a master plan that emphasised the prestige of the coloniser. According to (Giorghis and Gérard 2007), ease of movement was of prime importance to the occupying forces, and they immediately set about improving and building roads in Addis Ababa and to the regional capitals. The ultimate intention of the Italians was to create an East African colonial capital. However, the plan was imposed by the

colonialists' own planning ideology and values, with the intention to build a racially segregated city (see article of Harms and Puttkamer in this issue of TRIALOG, p. 8-19).

The next master-planning attempt for the city of Addis Ababa was by the British Sir Patric Abercrombie.<sup>6</sup> According to ORAAMP (2002), Abercrombie's plan in 1956 consisted of neighbourhood units as the basic city-organising concept. Yergalem (2007) noted that this master plan was formulated and based on four objectives: the creation of arterial roads, the control of land use, the preservation of open spaces, and the development of neighbourhood units. He also pointed out that this plan was not implemented, as it lacked formal endorsement by the government. This was followed by a French planning and urban design team under Luis de Mariene, which gave emphasis to Churchill Avenue and special attention to increasing the legibility of the city. It was implemented in 1965. During the period of the socialist regime, influential spatial changes were implemented by the Hungarian planner Polony. He designed Meskel Square<sup>7</sup> and proposed to connect Addis Ababa with Nazareth (100 km south of Addis).

Upon the establishment of the National Urban Planning Institute (NUPI) and the assembly of an Ethio-Italian team as the Addis Ababa Master Plan Office, a more consolidated plan was generated in 1986. The Addis Ababa master plan was prepared from 1984-1986 by Ethio-Italian cooperation and was meant to serve for 20 years; however, it was revised by the master plan revision project office (ORAAMP) between the years 1999-2002 before it completed its validity time. The two main reasons for revising the 1986 master plan were: firstly, the anticipation of socio-economic and spatial changes in the city development and, secondly, in 1991 a new political and economic order replaced the previous socialist regime's centralised system (ORAAMP 2002) with a transition towards federalism and a market-led economy. The Addis Ababa City Master Plan Project Office (AACMPPO) was established in June 2012 with the main objective "to conduct the revision of the then structure plan/city development plan with an efficient and effective project management style and

**5** It is, in fact, unique to other cities of Africa in that it was guided by indigenous plans from its early developments until the Italian occupation of Ethiopia, during which foreign plans started to emerge for Addis Ababa.

**6** According to the Greater London Plan initiated and composed by Patrick Abercrombie in 1944, eight towns were to be built in Outer London so as to evacuate the excess population; they were initially satellite towns and new towns later.

**7** One of the open spaces found in the middle of the city, the site is used for public gathering or for demonstrations and festivals – notably, the Meskel Festival from which it takes its name.



deployment of appropriate methodology together with highly skilled manpower, within the specified scope, time frame and budget". The project office was given a mandate to revise the previous master plan and develop a responsive, viable city development plan on the basis of various planning ideologies and principles for framing development options that could contribute to effective urban management and sustainable environmental, social and economic development.

## A journey to an integrated master plan

### Conditions and problems in the metropolitan region

According to a population projection (AASOIDPPO 2013), the urban population of Addis Ababa and the adjacent Oromia towns will grow to reach 6.6 and 11.3 million in 2025 and 2038, respectively.<sup>8</sup> Following this large population increase, huge developmental demands are expected, including: social services, housing, green areas, transportation, market centres, storage and manufacturing, administration units, office spaces, etc. Of course, with these projections both challenges and opportunities are expected to come. However, the existing facts reveal that the capital and surrounding areas are so far unable to take advantage of their physical proximity and comparative advantages. As data from various sources (AASOIDPPO 2013, OBFED 2010) indicate, for instance, the rural population around Addis Ababa is the most impoverished even in comparison to the remote areas of the country. Astonishingly, the people next to the primate city Addis Ababa are dependent on a hand-to-mouth economy and on inadequate social services. Poverty and unemployment are rampant.

Moreover, the surrounding Addis Ababa towns have been affected heavily by environmental pollution. The main cause is an alarming growth of industries and spontaneous urban settlements. A study (OBFED 2010) shows water, soil, air and related environmental pollution impacts are currently damaging the health conditions of the urban and rural populations in the surrounding towns. The shortage of basic services, and absolute poverty, are the pushing factors of rural urban migration. Besides, the area is characterised by scattered settlements and unplanned urban expansion. On the other hand, all water sources and landfill sites for Addis Ababa are found in the surrounding Oromia cities. Accordingly, Addis Ababa is directly or indirectly dependent on the Oromia region, which provides the city with basic resources, including water. Most of the horticulture and animal products the city consumes come from the surrounding Oromia towns. At the same time, the surrounding Oromia towns benefit from the huge market and social services that Addis Ababa offers. At the moment one can, in general, observe the following investment trends in the spatial units [see Figure 2 and 3]:

- Gelan-Dukem (along the southern outlet of the city of Addis Ababa): Heavy industries
- Burayu (west of Addis Ababa): Residential and commercial activities
- Legetafo/Legedadi (east of Addis Ababa): Real estate
- Sebeta (southwest of Addis Ababa): Residence and agro industry
- Sululta (north of Addis Ababa): Recreation and agro industry



On the other hand, the lack of adequate means of transport, market facilities, agro-processing industries and social services, as well as the poverty and limited flow of finance, can all be threats to positive socio-economic linkages in the spatial units. Hence, there should be a policy framework that can bring a solution thereof.

### Planning structure and the emergence of a new planning organisation

In June 2012, the Addis Ababa City Planning Project Office (AACPPO) was established with the main objective of conducting the revision of the last structure plan/master plan of the city with an efficient and effective project-management style (AACPPO 2016). From the outset, the project office was directly responsible to the Addis Ababa Urban Plan & Information Institute (AAUPII 2011). Nevertheless, soon after its establishment, the AACPPO became directly responsible to the supervisory board comprising of higher officials & decision makers, including the mayor of the city.

This office (AACPPO) metamorphosed into the Surrounding Oromia Integrated Development Plan Project Office (AASOIDPPO<sup>9</sup>). After this, the office (AASOIDPPO) was given an additional mandate to carry out the entire study for the integrated development plan for Addis Ababa city and the surrounding Oromia regional government towns in collaboration with the Oromia regional state. Accordingly, the main areas of its activities were identified as: regional development planning, land-use development, and the preparation of a structural plan, centres and market hierarchical development planning, urban transport planning, environmental development and planning, social and municipal service development and planning, local economic planning, industry development planning, urban agriculture planning, local development plans (LDP), urban tourism and heritage development planning and management, etc. In general, this office had a mandate to implement about 16 development-planning issues together with the aforementioned basic activities to prepare a development master plan for the city that

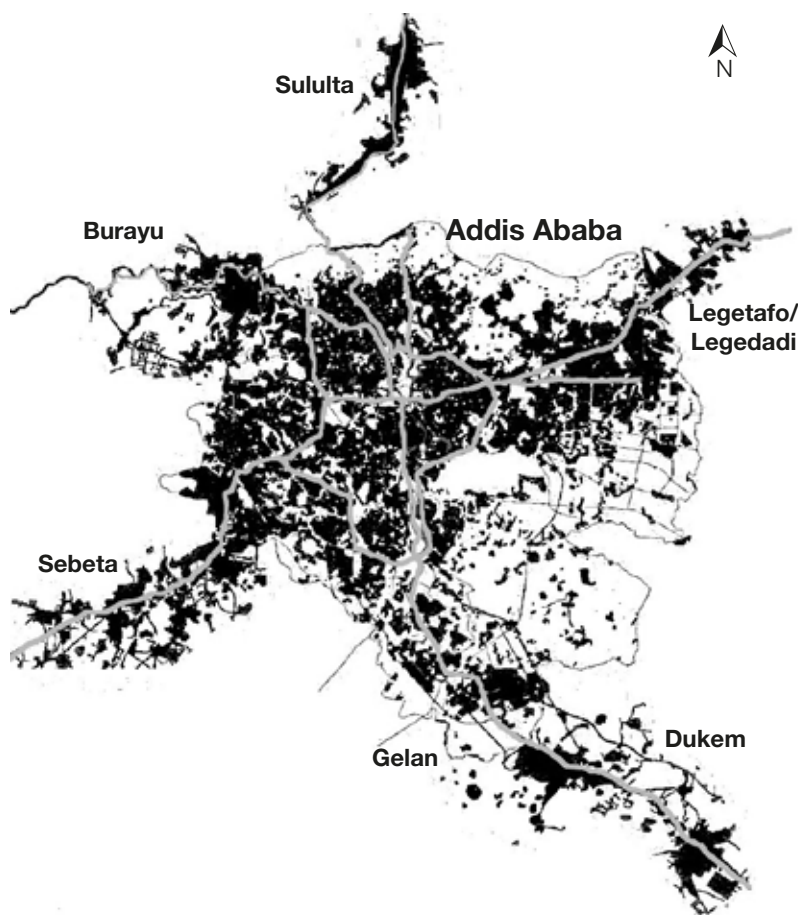
**Figure 2:** Addis Ababa and its surrounding Oromia small towns. Source: Addis Ababa City Master Plan Project Office (AACMPPO)

### References

- AACPPO (2016) *The Addis Ababa City Planning Project Office*. Unpublished Draft Executive Summary. Addis Ababa.
- AASOIDPPO – Addis Ababa and the Surrounding Oromia Special Zone Integrated Development Plan Project Office (2013) *Addis Ababa and the Surrounding Oromia Special Zone Integrated Development Plan (2014-2038)*. Unpublished Draft Executive Summary. Addis Ababa.

**8** The integrated master plan included 1.1 million hectares of land. After cancellation of the integrated master plan, the area was reduced to just 54,000/52,000 ha. of land of Addis Ababa.

**9** Addis Ababa and the Surrounding Oromia Integrated Development Plan Project Office sometimes used the name Addis Ababa and the Surrounding Oromia Specialized Zone Integrated Development Plan Project Office. In short both can be called (AASOIDPPO).



**Figure 3:** Addis Ababa, urbanisation along road corridors into surrounding Oromia small towns. Source: Resilient Cities Program / GFDRR 2015, own elaboration

**10**

The Lyon Town Planning Agency (LTPA) and Ethiopian Institute of Architecture, Building Construction and City Development (EiABC). The EiABC study document identified a number of shortcomings, including the misapplication of planning concepts, deviations from planning principles and concepts, and drawbacks of implementation. The Lyon Town Planning Agency evaluation study also stated some shortcomings, including the failure to have a clear supply of land for the housing of low-income people and a low regional focus.

**11**

The ruling party, the EPRDF (Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front), consists of four political parties. The parties are the Oromo Peoples' Democratic Organization (OPDO), which is based in the Oromia Region, the Amhara National Democratic Movement (ANDM), the Southern Ethiopian People's Democratic Movement (SEPDM), and the Tigrayan People's Liberation Front (TPLF).

should serve for the next 10-25 years as the holistic plan of the city and surrounding towns.

Before the establishment of the AASOIDPPO, two independent institutions, the LTPA and EiABC,<sup>10</sup> were commissioned to conduct a performance evaluation of the 2002 master plan of the city and the performance of the implementation of the structure plan. The evaluation study documents suggested how the next master plan of the city could be conducted. Unfortunately, both experienced institutions have proposed different types of organisational set-ups for the structure plan revision task. Accordingly, the LTPA has proposed a new project office outfitted with highly skilled professionals. Contrary to the idea of a project office, EiABC has proposed to set-up a planning entity within the city government that constantly links the planning agenda with the prevailing socio-economic and physical situations, and with political priorities and political agendas. At the end, a new project office called Addis Ababa City Planning Project Office (AACPPPO) was established. Subsequently, the same office but now with a different name (AASOIDPPO) was given an additional mandate to prepare an integrated master plan that had to envisage an internationally competitive city-region for a time span up to the year 2038. The goal was to develop a liveable, workable metropolitan region, a benchmark for good governance that would fulfil all development goals set in the national development plan. The national development plan mentions, inter alia, "to become a country where democratic rule, good governance and social justice reign upon the involvement and free will of its peoples and once extricating itself from poverty to reach the level of middle income economy by 2025". More specifically, this would mean improving the quality of social services and infrastructure, ensuring macroeconomic stability, and enhancing productivity in agriculture and manufacturing as major objectives of the plan (NPC 2015).

## Sources of misunderstanding: What went wrong then?

Factors contributing to the failure of the integrated master plan preparation could be many, varied and interconnected. However, the main factors are identified and discussed below. Some of these factors seem to emanate from the unclear constitutional rights of the Oromia region in relation to Addis Ababa city, and from manifestations of injustice like ethnic marginalisation. Conversely, it seems that personal interests over resources and lack of public discussion in the commencement also contributed to the futile result of the integrated master plan and to the misunderstandings of it.

## *From a unitary form of state to a federation of nine ethno-linguistic regional states and a critique of the concept of "localism" in planning*

As mentioned elsewhere in this paper, since 1995 and the Constitution of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, the country is organised into a federation of nine ethno-linguistically defined regional states. Likewise, since 1991, Ethiopia has departed from the old unitary form of state government and changed into a language-based federation (FDRE 1995). Presumably, one of the challenges is the fact that ethnic identities have been elevated to a primary political identity and much focus has been given to differences rather than communalities. Hence, the issue of "localism" was not clearly understood and possibly over-emphasised. White (2007) defines "localism" as the belief that local people, or local interests, have the right to determine what is best for a given locality. The real notion of "localism" positioned in a wider political context was misunderstood in the plan preparation and thus contributed to a loophole or lacking in the integrated master plan preparation process. Reflecting on this, the plan should have been formulated with a sense of "localism" by one strong agency directly responsible to both the city and regional governments and with the authority to lead, plan and direct its implementation.

## *Internal institutional structures of planning offices: "autonomous" planning institutions with expert bureaucrats or party-affiliated professionals*

Irrefutably, urban planning is a technical and political process. During the integrated master plan development, however, the "political" part of planning was missing. After all, in most cases political influence would be significant during the implementation process. The ruling party currently claims that nearly 5 million registered members are working in different government structures with a "political loyalty". Hence, the failure to set-up in the beginning an autonomous planning institution, one which would be recognised and accepted by these "politically loyal" members from the OPDO<sup>11</sup> side, contributed to the failure. In line with this, one of the alleged arguments for the failure was the unwaveringly bad experiences had by Oromo settlers in the peripheral areas of the city. Most had been dislocated without proper compensation and rehabilitation schemes for decades, and this apparently incited wide suspicion among the public at large from the Oromia side, which feared the same would happen at massive scale if the integration scheme were realised. Besides, the manifestation of ethnic marginalisation at macro level could be the nitty-gritty of the problem. This is to say that most Oromo elites think that



Oromos have been economically and politically marginalised despite the size of their population and their large territory. Some say, therefore, that the integrated master plan was used as a “scapegoat” to express their frustration. On the other hand, the institutional structure of the project office should have been fully composed of professionals, and the expert bureaucracy should have had the leading say in decision-making. In short, non-party-affiliated bureaucrats ought to hold an influential position in decision-making processes.

### **The resource “land” and special interests of “local elites”**

Another causal factor for the failure was the most “precious” resource: land. One unique character of the spatial units is that more than ever land ownership continues to be a contentious subject in the metropolitan region as the price of land is increasing every day. In each of these small towns, elites have strong interest in land, and countless people from different parts of the country have already gripped vast land plots in illicit ways (i.e., through unconstitutional actions). Some elites have “a Janus-faced” character and wrongly think that an integrated master plan will not benefit them as it brings more control over land. As a result, they opposed and went against the plan. In some cases, over-reliance on a few elites at the top also somehow contributed to the failure. Hence, the plan became the interest of a few politicians and marginalised the majority in the political realm. History has also shown that plans can be killed if the political winds turn against them. Especially a plan like this takes years, even decades, to be successfully implemented. For this, local officials need to survive and keep their political position; most often, however, they change their position to another. I believe, to this end, a political will from the executive (in this case each mayor of a lower-tier government structure) should have been institutionalised.

### **The need for definitions of targets, goals, and desired, realistic futures**

After the evaluation of the previous master plan of the city, a new project office was established. From the process of the establishment of the project office, anyone can understand that there would have been other alternatives had members of these spatial units been included in the new planning team from the beginning. This is to say that a new institutional structure, a new professional composition, and different planning approaches could have been followed. This should have at least been solved from the outset. However, in this master plan preparation process I witnessed, there were rarely problems related to professional abilities and talents in any government institution in the city. More specifically, by any form of measurement (i.e., experiences and education level), the available professionals could do an integrated master plan in such a scale. Therefore, I argue against those who claim that the failure has something to do with professional weakness. Incontestably, however, the plan should have gone beyond data gathering, analysis, and showing trends, it should have envisioned a desired and realistic future. There was a confusion of targets, in part because the team lacked a clear geographic scope. The plan should have had clearly defined targets, both thematically and in geographic scope. Causes and consequences of problems should have been analysed, as well as intended and unintended outcomes. Benefits to the surrounding small towns, as well as the responsibilities and duties of each actor, should have been presented. Above all,

any form of the new plan should explicitly justify the possible outcome and all should have been consulted from the outset.

### **Public discussions for the “public good” and not for private benefits**

I do believe that there was not “sufficient” recognition of the say of the local people. Lack of public discussion and ignoring other points of view was the major flaw from the outset. Here, I want to use Watson’s expression (2008) in her crossroads case study, “Differences go far beyond speech level misunderstandings or unwillingness to see the other’s point of view.” As a result of all this, in protest against the master plan several properties and innocent lives were lost, albeit, the master plan was a trigger but not the cause. As anyone can observe, even after the withdrawal of the integrated master plan, serious conflicts have continued. All in all, due to the above-mentioned reasons and the failures to integrate and collaborate with the Oromia Special Zone, the intended comprehensive and integrated development plan could not be realised. After all, planning is all about improving the life of the people and the public good. Its ultimate objective is to address what people need, not what local politicians with private interests want. All in all, not the elites but the people lost numerous benefits from an integrated master plan that could have been a pioneer in the planning history of the country.

### **What should have been done and/or needs to be done to have a comprehensive metropolitan plan?**

The importance of having an integrated metropolitan plan for Addis Ababa and the surrounding Oromia towns is unquestionable. [Figure 4] The reasons include: the current urbanisation rate of Addis Ababa and surrounding regions is very high, as mentioned before in this paper, and this brings challenges and opportunities. For instance, employment and market opportunities are positive aspects. On the other hand, the negative influence of/on Addis Ababa is very serious if not counteracted by an integrated regional development plan. As a case in point, liquid and solid waste discharges into the downstream rivers have been affecting human & animal health in the surrounding towns. The encroachment of the city toward arable land is another big challenge, one which displaces the farmers from potential and fertile cropland. This in turn threatens the food security in the area. Therefore, the horizontal city expansion of Addis Ababa city has to be limited to its existing boundaries with the planning principle of compact city development. This and other similar issues must be addressed through an integrated regional development plan. I would, therefore, suggest the subsequent issues to be addressed before beginning to plan a metropolitan and/or an integrated master plan:

**1. Building a strong institutional set-up.** This is required to guard against “doing things haphazardly”, “underachieving outcomes” and even “over-governing”. The “institutional set-up” should be established with the consultation of both governments (city and regional state). Intergovernmental relations with a strong decision-making framework and trust should be developed. Pacione (2005) noted that the realisation of sustainable urban development needs integrated planning, a decision-making framework, and a fundamental change in values and perspectives of planning processes. Unquestionably, the shaping of spatial structures at the urban, regional and national levels involves numerous kinds of actors and planning activities. Each of these actors must understand

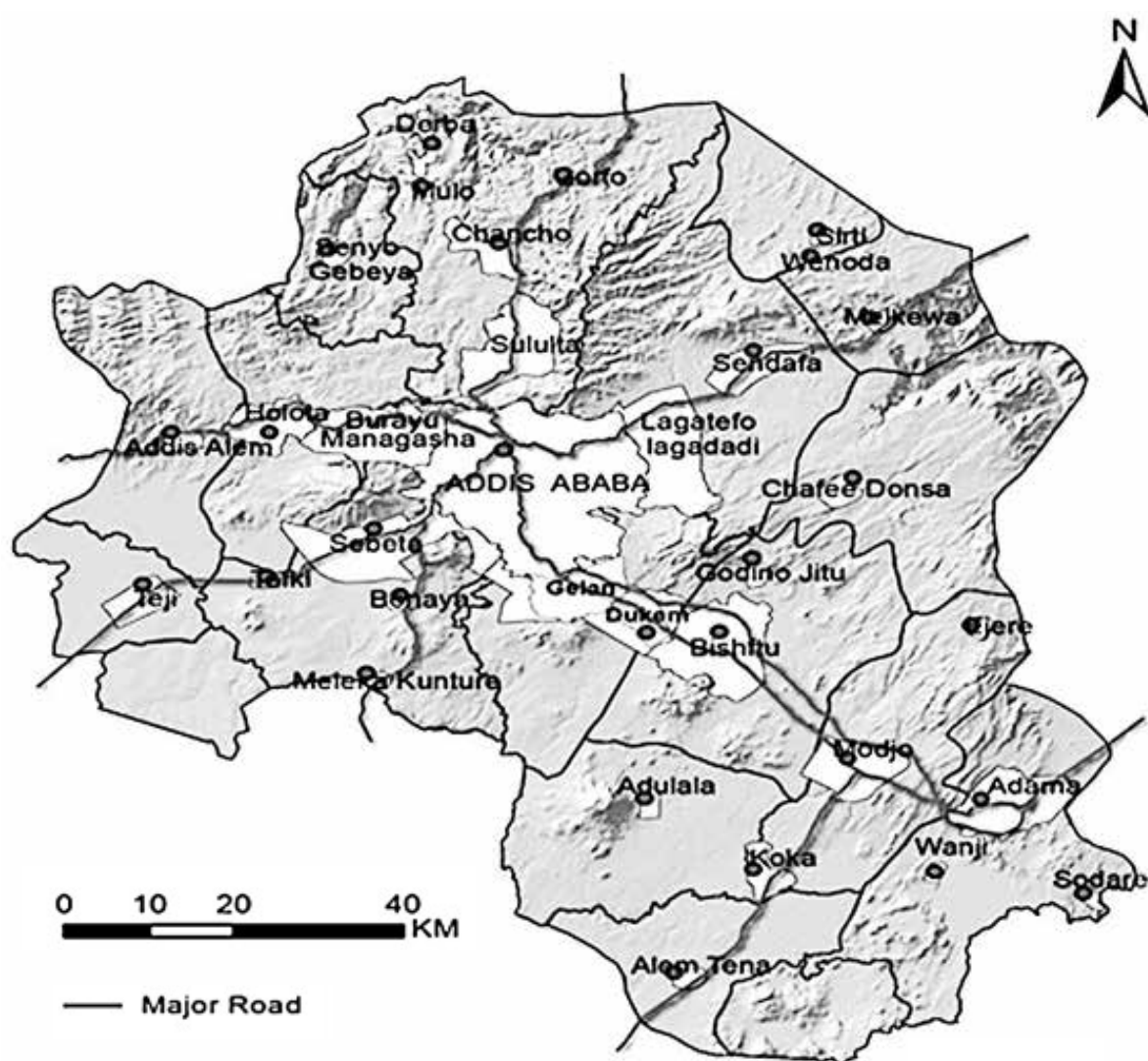
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**Figure 4:** Addis Ababa's connection with other cities.  
Source: Addis Ababa City Master Plan Project Office (AACMPPO)

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the issues as of how other actors perceive things important for successful coordination.

**2. Lobbying/advocacy/communications.** Some people were curious about the boundary issues and about the city's expansion, and claimed that the plan was to expand the city and to annex the surrounding cities of Oromia. This and similar misunderstandings could have been easily avoided through better communication and advocacy work for the plan. After all, in the 1995 FDRE constitution it is clearly stated that the act of altering boundaries cannot normally happen without a formal constitutional amendment or through the self-determination act that is overseen by the House of the Federation. It is unquestionable that the effective creation of awareness and communication for better public relations plays a pivotal role in avoiding misconceptions. Success in the process of preparing the plan can, in fact, be achieved through better communications and improved public relations. Considering what has been aspired to be achieved in the preparation of an integrated master plan, however, there remain gaps that require to be seriously addressed. Though we may not realise it, billboards, radio, TV, newspapers, logos, slogans and advertisements are part and parcel of an awareness and communications strategy. This is confirmed by literature reviews and studies of best practices.

**3. Transparency.** Before and during the process of setting up the planning office, each player (both primary and secondary stakeholders<sup>12</sup>) ought to be consulted. Essentially, each player's

duties/responsibilities should be publicly known and transparent so that the larger public can become a "watch dog". Watson (2008) pointed out that planning is fundamentally an ethical activity as it raises questions about what should be done, for whom and by whom, and with what benefits or losses. As an expert who participated in the preparation of the planning process of the 10<sup>th</sup> master plan of the city, the intention was not, as noted previously, to incorporate surrounding small towns and make them part of a greater Addis Ababa, but rather to have an integrated master plan in addition to the master plans each of these towns had and to plan together at least on the common issues (including environment and transportation), and to prepare better for anticipated development obstacles. Essentially, therefore, had the project office been more open to the public from the start, the larger public on the Oromia side would have accepted and owned it rather than rejected it

**4. Recognising the role of politics in plan making and implementation.** Planning is not only a technocratic task but a political one as well. Therefore, it is possible to use both soft and hard power<sup>13</sup> as a means to arrive at an intended outcome. Power and politics have a significant role in plan making and implementation. Planning inherently relies on means of communicative and interactive discourses, through which hegemonic power habitually permeates. The misconception of planning as a merely scientific and technical endeavour results in an inability for planners to deal with, and confront, the many types of power. Essentially, all planning efforts from the governmental side at all administrative levels have some form of spatial



implications, whether directly, e.g., through physical location, or indirectly, e.g., through an influence on forces that slowly or dramatically, intentionally or unintentionally, transform space.

**5. Clarity in the concept and scope starting from the outset.** During the plan preparation process, the various terms included in the discussion – “structural plan”, “master plan”, “comprehensive regional plan” or “integrated master plan”, “integrated regional plan” – were used in different contexts. The terminology requires clarification from the outset so that any form of confusion can easily be avoided. In short, “conceptualisation” of each of these terminologies is very crucial to avoid any misunderstandings. The term “master plan” has incessantly lacked a single form of conceptualisation. Given all the above terminologies, therefore, one could say that the concept of master plan needs to be given an operational/conceptual definition so that it would be possible to have a common understanding on the concept itself. All players need to be very clear about how the usages of the above-mentioned terms are different in meaning. Therefore, being aware of these differences and taking the trouble to use words carefully can reduce this confusion in our own thinking as well as in communicating with others. Patsy Healey (2008) acknowledges that communicating groups may operate within different “systems of meaning”, which means that “we see things differently because words, phrases, expressions, objects, are interpreted differently according to our frame of reference” (Healey and Hillier 2008). In the light of the forgoing, therefore, be it a master plan, an integrated plan, regional plan or structural plan, they all ought to be conceptualised in the social, political, economic and environmental context of the country set-up.

In regards to geographic scope, for successful metropolitan planning, the planning scale needs to be clearly defined, as a metropolitan plan comprises of multiple scales. The planning area together with its sphere of influence ought to be indicated. Similarly, each of the towns included in an integrated master plan framework will continue to have their own master plan, albeit a “harmonisation” process could have also been clearly indicated. Unquestionably, a metropolitan plan can be prepared at a bigger scale for metropolitan regions that include some cities/towns together with a big city. A GIZ (2014) discussion paper states that the concept of metropolitan regions focuses on conurbations that accommodate about 1-10 million inhabitants. Metropolitan plans (Gleeson et al. 2004) are strategic instruments for the management of urban change at a variety of spatial scales, ranging from cadastral parcels through neighbourhoods and localities, up to and beyond the metropolitan level. Metropolitan planning takes place in a social understanding and organisation of the possibilities of planning. In Ghana, for instance, not only in Kumasi but also in Accra and Sekondi-Takoradi, the urban agglomerations are expanding beyond their cities’ boundaries and occupying important parts of the regions. Administratively, those parts of the regions are called sub-regions, which are in turn composed of several districts. For a Greater Kumasi, which includes its surrounding 7 districts, they have a “Comprehensive Urban Development Master Plan” (JICA 2013). In our case, the 1995 FDRE constitution still lacks clarity in explicitly indicating the interest of Oromia in Addis Ababa. Therefore, such lack of clarity needs to be addressed before planning to plan about these spatial units of the region.

**6. A greater public involvement.** There ought to be greater public participation, including the right to participate in identification of the problem, the right to get information

concerning the plan (both its stages and components) and activities affecting it, and the right of participation in the decision-making processes. The point to note in this regard is that “people are not buying products or services, but solutions to their problems”. Even before seeking public acceptance for different proposals, there is a need to get acceptance for the idea of planning itself. The famous saying noted by Sherry Arnstein (1969) – “I participate; you participate; he participates; we participate; you participate ... They profit” – means participation without redistribution of power is an empty and frustrating process for the powerless, and this should be taken in to consideration. Through communicative action theory, Watson (2008) also argues that planning decisions should be reached through collaborative processes involving all stakeholders, and conforming to particular rules that ensure that participation is fair, equal and empowering. Over and all, planning is to improve the life of people.

## Concluding remarks

From the discussion above it is clear that many efforts have been put forth to prepare an integrated master plan intended to be realised, but in the end all efforts made came to naught. Most of the problems – such as the lack of a coordinated transport network system between/among these cities, conversion of open spaces to other uses, unplanned growth trends of these towns, uncontrolled and uncoordinated haphazard growth of cities – can only be overcome through coordination and harmonious unitary work. This will require a sustainable, strong political will and the building of appropriate human capacity, plus effective public participation and a monitoring system. The economic, social and transport linkages of the surrounding small towns with the capital are limited to national highways. Thus, it is in account of these miserable situations that the need for an integrated development plan becomes essential, both for the capital city and its surrounding regions.

This capital of the “developmental” state has five outlets to leave/enter all parts of the county, and all roads pass through the surrounding small towns that require coordination and one comprehensive plan. Yet, the required collaboration of the two regional governments (Addis Ababa city and Oromia regional state) seems, for the time being, unrealised. However, I believe, sooner or later they will have a comprehensive plan as natural and manmade forces necessitate so. Above all, “Greater Addis Ababa” (with more than 10 million inhabitants) is expected to be reached soon, which demands working closely together with the neighbouring spatial units. Besides, there is a strong need for a responsive and integrated plan to support the dynamic transformation of Addis Ababa and surrounding towns. After all, any city plan should have a regional focus as linkages between cities are inevitable. A planning decision that serves everyone’s interests, or is accepted by all, may indeed be hard to achieve, or even nearly impossible to find. Therefore, critique is expected from somewhere/someone, even from those who had directly participated in the planning process. If some parts of the contents of the critique are widely used, it may help to achieve the intended objectives. Therefore, without doubt, there will be more pressing needs of having an integrated master plan in response to both intended and unintended challenges and opportunities. Besides, effectiveness and efficiency could be achieved through “making cities with less but better planning”. As a general conclusion, therefore, it seems appropriate to ask: “When and how can the age of non-planning be stopped?”

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# Urban Housing Policies in Africa between Supply- and Demand-driven Concepts: Ethiopia and South Africa as Examples

Beate Lohnert

## **Städtische Wohnungspolitik in Afrika zwischen angebots- und nachfrageorientierten Konzepten: die Beispiele Äthiopien und Südafrika**

*Seit Jahrzehnten sind die Städte Afrikas mit hohen Urbanisierungsraten konfrontiert, die sich sowohl aus Land-Stadt-Migrationsprozessen als auch aus einem hohen natürlichen Bevölkerungswachstum speisen. Millionen von Menschen leben in prekären Wohnverhältnissen in den Städten Afrikas. Gleichzeitig sind die meisten afrikanischen Staaten nicht in der Lage, diese unzureichenden Wohnbedingungen eines Großteils ihrer Bevölkerung zu beheben. Es wird in der Regel nicht in Frage gestellt, dass diese Probleme vorherrschen, es bestehen jedoch erhebliche Unterschiede, was die Ziele der jeweiligen Wohnungspolitik und der Wohnungsbaustrategien angeht. Der Beitrag problematisiert den Begriff der „Angemessenheit“ von Wohnraum und diskutiert die Auswirkungen unterschiedlichster Operationalisierungen dieser normativen Vorgabe auf die Wohnungspolitik in verschiedenen Ländern. Anhand des Vergleichs von zwei sehr unterschiedlichen Beispielen – Äthiopien und Südafrika – werden unterschiedliche Wohnungsbauphilosophien und -politiken analysiert und kritisch reflektiert.*

For many decades now most African states have been challenged with rapid urbanisation rates fuelled by rural-urban migration processes and natural population growth at the same time. Millions of people are now living in precarious housing conditions in the cities and towns. While the problems and the affected number of citizens remain high, many African states have largely been unable to manage or reduce the increasing number of people housed under inadequate conditions. The overall trends in housing, and the problems associated with them, are generally not questioned; significant vagueness, however, exists on the goals of housing policy and housing strategy, and especially on the operationalisation of adequate housing.

This paper explores different approaches to the notion of adequacy within the housing discourse, taking different viewpoints into account, and explains how the conception of adequacy affects the housing policy in different countries. By comparing two very different examples – Ethiopia and South Africa – different housing philosophies and policies are analysed and the outcomes are critically reflected.

## **The discussion on adequate housing**

The impacts of poor housing on the development of individuals and whole societies are more or less obvious, but: What is good or adequate housing? What aims and goals are housing programmes in Africa striving to achieve? And what are the standards to be met?

Talking about adequate housing, the oft-cited references are the publications of UN-Habitat. In its 2009 publication "The Right to Adequate Housing" (2009: 3), UN-Habitat notes that "adequate housing must provide more than

four walls and a roof". In the further reading of the document, seven criteria are listed as needing to be met before housing can be called adequate. These are: tenure security; availability of services, materials, facilities and infrastructure; affordability; habitability (safety, space and protection); accessibility; location; and cultural adequacy (UN-Habitat 2009: 4). In the Habitat III issue paper (UN-Habitat 2015: 1), the operationalisation of adequacy is done by saying what and when adequacy is **not** achieved:

- *"Security of tenure:* housing is not adequate if its occupants do not have a degree of tenure security which guarantees legal protection against forced evictions, harassment and other threats.
- *Availability of services, materials, facilities and infrastructure:* housing is not adequate if its occupants do not have safe drinking water, adequate sanitation, energy for cooking, heating, lighting, food storage or refuse disposal.
- *Affordability:* housing is not adequate if its cost threatens or compromises the occupants' enjoyment of other human rights.
- *Habitability:* housing is not adequate if it does not guarantee physical safety or provide adequate space, as well as protection against the cold, damp, heat, rain, wind, other threats to health and structural hazards.
- *Accessibility:* housing is not adequate if the specific needs of disadvantaged and marginalised groups are not taken into account.
- *Location:* housing is not adequate if it is cut off from employment opportunities, healthcare services,



schools, childcare centres and other social facilities, or if located in polluted or dangerous areas.

- *Cultural adequacy*: housing is not adequate if it does not respect and take into account the expression of cultural identity."

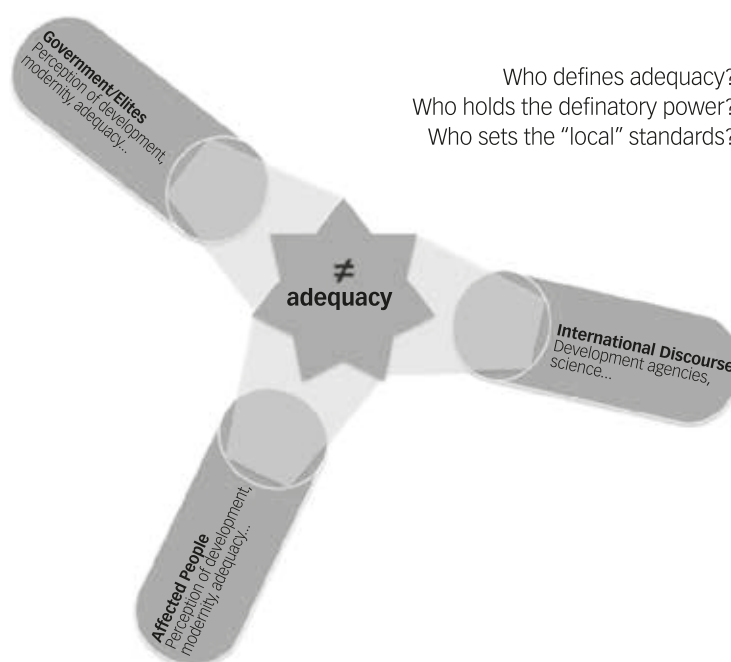
However, all the requirements are subject to interpretation. The interpretation, elaboration and final implementation of "adequate" housing is influenced by the history, policy, culture, economy, and power relations within a country or region. And they are dependent on the physical environment as well as on the financial, technical and architectural feasibility, plus the general availability, of culturally accepted solutions.

What is, for example, the adequate living space for a person or a family? And in which way is the expression of cultural identity to be respected? Is there something like a local standard, given the fact that most regulations accorded to urban housing in Africa copy and adopt Western standards? Taking these standards – which are strongly influenced by Western, middle-class perceptions of adequacy – seriously, the majority of urban housing in Sub-Saharan Africa definitely does not meet local, official standards and regulations. In many African cities, informal housing conditions are the rule rather than the exception. Although the majority of the population of African cities live in conditions generally labelled as "substandard", a whole range of differences are apparent. Slums and informal settlements are neither homogeneous in respect to their respective living conditions, nor do the populations represent a homogeneous mass of destitute, deprived and disillusioned people. Yet, generalisations like the above dominate public discourses on the issue. In fact, quite a number of informal dwellers would, perhaps with the exception of the question of tenure security, describe their habitation as adequate to their needs and would prefer to stay where they are instead of being relocated to some far away destination and housing solution that does not match their customs and needs.

Stressing diversity, however, does not mean to neglect the problems of the majority of African urban dwellers objectively living in housing conditions that allow them no room for the development of their capabilities and skills. Nor does it deny the fact that adequate housing is an asset and precondition for the well-being of individuals and whole nations. [Figure 1]

### **Political instrumentalisation of adequacy**

On a political level, perceptions of what is adequate housing and what is not, not only differ significantly according to the position of the person or organisation that defines adequacy but also on the open or hidden agenda it refers to. This could be one explanation for the significant mismatch of local regulations on the one hand and realities on the other in African cities. Government perceptions of development, modernity and adequacy are coined by a political and intellectual elite and by the international development discourse. In the political arena, the definition of standards is frequently instrumentalised for the mobilisation of clientele and thus inevitably raises expectations on the side of the needy. A prominent example in this respect is the role housing played and still plays in



▲ **Figure 1:** Adequacy. Source: B. Lohnert

post-apartheid South Africa. During the election campaign for the first free elections to be held in South Africa, the question of housing for previously disadvantaged groups was politicised and uploaded with the symbolic meaning of shifting power relations between classes. In its 1994 election manifesto, the African National Congress Party (ANC) declared reasonable living conditions as a basic human right and announced, among other things, the building of one-million homes and the provision of running water and flush toilets to over a million families within five years. And the 1996 constitution (chapter 2, section 26) states that everyone "has the right to have access to adequate housing". In a situation where housing was desperately needed, followers of the Pan Africanist Congress Party (PAC) instrumentalised the issue further around the slogan "One family, one plot", a cynical pun on the liberation-era slogan of PAC, "One settler, one bullet". More than twenty years later, housing still is a political issue and frustrated expectations have led to social unrest and violent protest during all national and municipal election campaigns so far. For some years now, so-called "service delivery protests" have been common events in the public life of South Africa.

Although a learning process can be observed in the South African housing policy and strategy, in so far as that rental and apartment housing is now also perceived as an option, for most disadvantaged South Africans adequate housing is still synonymous with: "One family, one plot, one house". An expectation nobody can realistically think can be achieved within a reasonable time without leading to massive side effects causing environmental degradation and urban sprawl – to name just two. As Tomlinson (2015: 4) formulates: "Part of the problem [...] is that poor households have interpreted the Constitution's housing mandate as giving them a right to a free house." Unlike many other countries in Sub-Saharan Africa, however, in South Africa much has been done to meet the housing backlog despite the fact that politically announced targets have not been fully met. And South Africa is spending substantial amounts of state subsidies on the low-cost housing sector.

A closer look at the national discourse on housing rights in other African states reveals that nearly all of them have some aspects of housing rights incorporated into their national legislation. The majority already do so in their constitutions, like Angola (1992), Burkina Faso (1991), Cap Verde (1992), DRC (1992), Equatorial Guinea (1982), Ethiopia (1994), Ghana (1993), Lesotho (1992), Mali (1992), Mozambique (1990), Namibia (1990), Nigeria (1989), Senegal (2001), South Africa (1996) and Zambia (1991) (UN-Habitat 2006). Nevertheless, only a few articles clearly point to the right to adequate housing; rather, most point to related aspects like the inviolability of the home (Angola, Ghana, Lesotho, Senegal, Sudan, Zambia), or housing is named among many other aspects of social rights (Burkina Faso, DRC, Equatorial Guinea, Mali, Mozambique, Namibia). Only a few have specified further what they mean by a right to housing. The Constitution of Cap Verde (1992, Article 69) states that, "Everyone shall have the right to a dwelling which should have a minimum of dignity [...]." The Nigerian Constitution (1989) declares that, "The State shall direct its policy toward ensuring: [...] that suitable and adequate shelter [...] are provided for all citizens" (UN-Habitat 2006). In general, politicised discussions on the adequacy and standards of housing often fail to realistically assess what can be achieved under the actual conditions and thus raise expectations on the side of the affected population, which inevitably leads to frustration and disillusion. However, on the other hand most African states do not even specify what is to be understood as "adequate housing", or even completely avoid touching on the term in official legislation. While in the first case at least a public discourse is stimulated and brought forward, all latter cases simply ignore basic human rights in their national legislation – because rights that are not specified officially are not real rights that can be claimed.

### ***The meaning of housing***

Turning back to the initial question of what is adequate housing, it is always fruitful to look at peoples' perceptions of adequacy. From a user's perspective, the

definition of adequacy is very much influenced by his or her social and cultural background as well as by individual experiences, needs, priorities and capabilities at a given time. Although a dwelling can be described by objective indicators, the same material and immaterial conditions can be evaluated completely different through the filter of subjectively and culturally varying perceptions and underlying individual needs and demands – as well as values, goals and aspirations. At this point, the notion of meaning needs to be considered. Besides the sheerly functional and normative aspects usually referred to in attempts to define adequacy by politicians and planners, the nature of housing also conveys a whole set of latent functions like values or identity from the perspective of the user in dialogue with his or her social environment.

Questions like which kind of material and infrastructural housing features urban informal and slum dwellers would define as necessary, satisfactory or better should be complemented by questions dealing with the meaning of housing. Approaches that account for the meanings urban dwellers attach to their dwelling and, if they are communicated and become visible for others, interpret which kind of identity, values and goals are conveyed, could give rise to new perspectives in the discussion on adequacy. It is the engagement in these questions that might not only give hints to individual and group conceptions of today but also shed light on their aspirations for the future. By proposing to explore these kind of questions, we clearly turn away from the perception of slum dwellers as a homogeneous mass of poor and destitute people waiting to get their – however defined – basic needs satisfied. On the contrary, we regard informal and slum dwellers as active agents in the process of shaping and reshaping the fixed and semi-fixed features of their habitations.

Using examples from South Africa and Ethiopia, standing for two contrasting and somehow contradictory examples of housing policy, we want to illustrate what has been said above.



**Figure 2:** Material structures and status symbols of middle class urban living, Cape Town, South Africa. Photo: B. Lohnert 2000



The political and public discourse on housing in South Africa has clearly shaped the notion of adequacy on the consumer side towards the picture of homeownership of a one-family house. From the very beginning of the housing policy of the new South Africa, homeownership of single-family units for previously through Apartheid disadvantaged groups has been promoted. Many informal settlers adopt this perceived reference frame by trying to come as close as possible to what they think is standard urban living. They do so by copying material structures and status symbols of what they perceive as middle-class urban living. In all informal settlements in South Africa, for example, you will find symbols that visualise what their occupants perceive as middle-class suburban housing. You will find metal or wooden fences and gates built around the shacks, and stylised burglar bars in windows (without having the original [middle-class] function of protection against burglary), and nicely arranged front gardens with trimmed lawns (Lohnert 2010). As soon as a certain state of security is reached, people start investing in status symbols like television sets and microwaves, which they then display visibly – even if the devices don't work (Lohnert 2002). [Figure 2]

Within the political environment of Ethiopia, housing policy is not part of a broader public or political discourse. Here, the state is setting the standards. The actual extensive constructions of condominium apartment houses all over Ethiopia and, at the same time, the rigorous demolition of traditional formal and informal dwellings enforce people to adapt to living in apartments. Also, in this case, ownership of the apartment centres the strategy. The perception of life in a condominium by the actual inhabitants varies from modern, advanced and hip to a financial burden that can only be sustained by subletting of rooms (e.g., kitchen) and cutting expenses in other important fields, like schooling (Fein 2009).

### Urbanisation and housing policies in Ethiopia and South Africa

Ethiopia is the least-urbanised country in Africa and is predicted to see a major increase in the urban population from 2000 to 2050 (that said, even then the rural population will still be in the majority). Nevertheless, Ethiopia is one of the most rapidly urbanising countries in Sub-Saharan Africa, with a current annual urban growth rate of up to 4% on average (<<https://www.citypopulation.de>> 1.4.17).

Addis Ababa, with more than 3.2 million inhabitants in 2016 (CSA 2018: 36, Brinkhoff 2017), is the primate city of the country. It is the centre of politics and economy, as well as social and material infrastructure, leaving the next following cities, with around 300,000 inhabitants, far behind. The growth rate of Addis Ababa has been 2.2% per year (2007-15) (Brinkhoff 2017), nearly matching the natural population increase of 2.5%.

Leulseged et al. (2012) assert that Addis Ababa expanded its built-up areas by 12,093 km<sup>2</sup> within 24 years, leading to the conversion of croplands, forestlands, and grasslands. The effect of this urban sprawl has been forest and soil degradation, water pollution, agricultural-community displacement, and the emergence of further informal housing.

**Table 1:**  
**Land-use and land-cover changes in Addis Ababa City, 1986-2010**

LULC Type	1986		2000		2010	
	km <sup>2</sup>	%	km <sup>2</sup>	%	km <sup>2</sup>	%
Built-up areas	67.08	12.95	124.61	24.06	188.01	36.28
Forest cover	192.54	37.16	80.82	15.60	67.86	13.10
Grassland	25.21	4.87	28.55	5.51	23.69	4.57
Cropland	233.25	45.02	284.02	54.83	238.63	46.05
<b>Total</b>	<b>518</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>518</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>518</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Leulseged et al. 2012: 15

A Landsat analysis, done by Leulseged et al. (2012: 15), clearly confirms that the built-up areas have spread at the cost of the forest.

In connection to this, it is important to explain that the first wave of urban expansion between 1986 and 2000 was accompanied by an increased demand for wood for building purposes, which also contributed to the loss of forest. As already mentioned, in Ethiopia, the state owns the land and designates its purpose. However, still today quite a portion of agricultural land is sold by farmers (illegally, because they are not the owners) to urban dwellers to build houses. With reference to the impact of the horizontal growth of Addis Ababa, Leulseged et al. (2012: 16) emphasise that “inappropriate solid and liquid waste disposal is polluting urban and peri-urban water, soil, and the air”. In summary, the urban sprawl of Addis Ababa is endangering the provisioning, regulating, and supporting services of the ecosystem. Besides impacts on the ecosystem, the sprawl of Addis Ababa has already caused severe conflicts between farmers and urban dwellers. Moreover, the new “master plan” of the Ethiopian government to expand Addis Ababa into the State of Oromia has caused a political crisis and violent contestations. The expansion plans are seen as a governmental land-grab that threatens local farmers and will lead to mass evictions. At the same time, the political and security situation, the housing crises, and a saturated informal sector will result in further migration to the mid-sized cities. But also investments into housing and infrastructure (e.g., 13 new universities have been built over the last years) act as pull-factors to these towns (e.g., Nazret: 4.9%, Gondar: 5.7%, Bahir Dar: 5.7%, Mek'ele: 5.1% and Jima: 4.9% population increase per year between 2007 and 2015 – see Brinkhoff 2017).

In South Africa, currently 65% of all inhabitants live in urban areas. Nevertheless, the cities and towns are still growing at an average rate of 2.4% per year. Johannesburg (iGoli/eGoli/iRhawutini) is the leading city in South Africa, with around 8 million inhabitants and a growth rate of 2.9% (2001-2011) per year, followed by Cape Town, with 3.5 million inhabitants and an annual growth rate of 2.5%. The third-largest city of South Africa, Durban (eThekweni), is growing less rapidly, with an increase of 1.5% per annum, matching the general natural population increase of the country. While Johannesburg and Cape Town are still gaining population through migration, Durban's growth is



▲ **Figure 3:** Architecture contest, Cape Town, Weltevreden. Photo: B. Lohnert 2000

1

Besides general imponderabilities associated with census surveys and analysis, the comparability of population data are complicated by the fact that definitions of urban and rural vary from country to country. They are subject to change in administrative directions and boundaries from time to time and may not be standardised among the different statistical units within a country. Longitudinal studies and comparison of crude data, even within one country, are also impeded by the growth of rural settlements which, hence, are reclassified as urban. The data used here have been cross-checked according to plausibility and own observations of the author.

▼ **Figure 4:** Standard houses, Cape Town, Joe Slovo Park. Photo: B. Lohnert 2000

mainly attributed to a natural increase. Also, in South Africa the mid-sized cities are growing faster through migration than the very big ones (e.g., Middelburg/Mhluzi in Mpumalanga province, from ca. 88,000 to 163,000 from 2001-2011, a 6.4% population growth annually, or Kokstad/Bhongweni in KwaZulu-Natal, with a 6.6% population growth annually) (Brinkhoff 2017, Statistics South Africa 2017, UNDESA 2014).<sup>1</sup>

### ***Housing in South Africa: policies, challenges and achievements***

The housing backlog in South Africa has been discussed as one of the greatest challenges for the first freely elected (in 1994) government of South Africa, with an estimated number of 1.5 million people living under precarious conditions in shacks or informal housing then. According to Tomlinson (2015: 1), 2.5 million houses have been provided countrywide since 1994, together with another 1.2 million serviced sites. Nevertheless, the housing backlog increased up to 2.1 million units and the number of informal settlements across the country increased from around 300 to more than 2,000 by 2015. "At the same time, the housing subsidy has gone up from R12,500 per household to some R160,500 today, while state spending on housing and community amenities has risen from 1% to 3.7% of GDP" (Tomlinson 2015: 1). "Today's backlog numbers are thus more likely the result of how policy has

in practice been interpreted over the past two decades, rather than how it was intended to be implemented" (Tomlinson 2015: 3). In fact, the first housing policy intended – besides delivering housing for the people in need – to use the housing subsidy for ownership and as a means for redistribution and empowerment of previously disadvantaged groups (Lohnert 2002, 2010). Policy and planning had been orientated towards these aims, as the maximum of the non-repayable subsidies for the poorest should be sufficient to buy ground and a serviced house – generally one-storied. (See Figure 3, the picture of an architecture contest in Cape Town to build a house for a certain subsidy sum.)

While there was a lot of trial and error at the beginning, the 2009 housing code specified that a standalone building must have at least 40m<sup>2</sup> of floor space, two bedrooms, a separate bathroom with a toilet, a shower and hand basin, and a combined living area and kitchen (Government of South Africa 2009). [Figure 4]

Today, obviously, a culture of taking free housing for granted has developed amongst some people under 40 years of age, although they were never the target group of the architects of the housing policy that has its origin in the 1996 constitution of the country. The ownership policy continued to dominate for some time. Arguments against a home-ownership policy – e.g., that the normally







◀ **Figure 5:** "Matchbox house", Cape Town, Joe Slovo Park. Photo: B. Lohnert 2000

**2**  
RDP = Reconstruction and Development Programme which started in 1994

one-storey homes with yards for extension (colloquially named "matchbox" or "RDP"<sup>2</sup> houses and criticised for being too small) cause urban sprawl and that the houses are inhabited primarily by multi-local households or migrant workers, who are not "here to stay" – were mostly ignored at the beginning. [Figure 5]

Now, a shift from the ownership of single houses towards more rental social housing, which is assigned to contribute to density and affordability, is underway. The middle class (like teachers, nurses, civil servants, etc.) has been neglected by the state housing policy so far because they neither qualified for a subsidy, as they earn too much, nor did they have access to secure a mortgage, because for this they earn too little. At the same time, the private rental sector is not able to supply enough and affordable housing.

A programme to support middle-income classes to acquire a mortgage has been set in place [Figure 6], and instead of building more houses, the government intends to upgrade informal housing and supply services. South Africa's housing policy, at the moment, is characterised by different directions. On the one hand, for the poorest dwellers, a more demand-driven in-situ upgrading policy of informal settlements was followed, replacing the one-family-one-plot logic of post-apartheid. On the other hand, the support of large-scale, supply-driven rental options is

being accelerated for those who mainly suffer under the quantitative housing backlog. The third direction of the housing policy is to support the middle class in their struggle for housing ownership. Which direction will dominate in the future is unclear, but what it is clear is that the period of free housing for everybody in the lowest income bracket will fade out sooner or later. Designed mainly for previously disadvantaged people during apartheid, this group of people is slowly but surely decreasing. Regarding the latest developments, it appears that the state at present prefers to invest in mega-projects, which are mainly greenfield developments in the periphery and resemble in many aspects the "new cities" currently being built all over Africa. Developments like Cosmo City (northwest of Johannesburg), which is expected to house between 65,000 and 70,000 people, can be observed all around the big cities of the country (e.g., Conurbia/Durban). These developments aim for a mixture of ownership and rental housing as well as a mixture of socio-economic groups, by offering fully subsidised houses, credit-linked houses, and fully bonded houses situated alongside the more spacious solution for the better-offs. However, these developments have been widely criticised by urban planners as even speeding up the exclusion of the urban poor and, in turn, spatial fragmentation (i.a. Watson 2014). To what extent the plans of a mixed, smart city will turn into reality will only be apparent after a couple of years have passed and a certain consolidation has taken place.

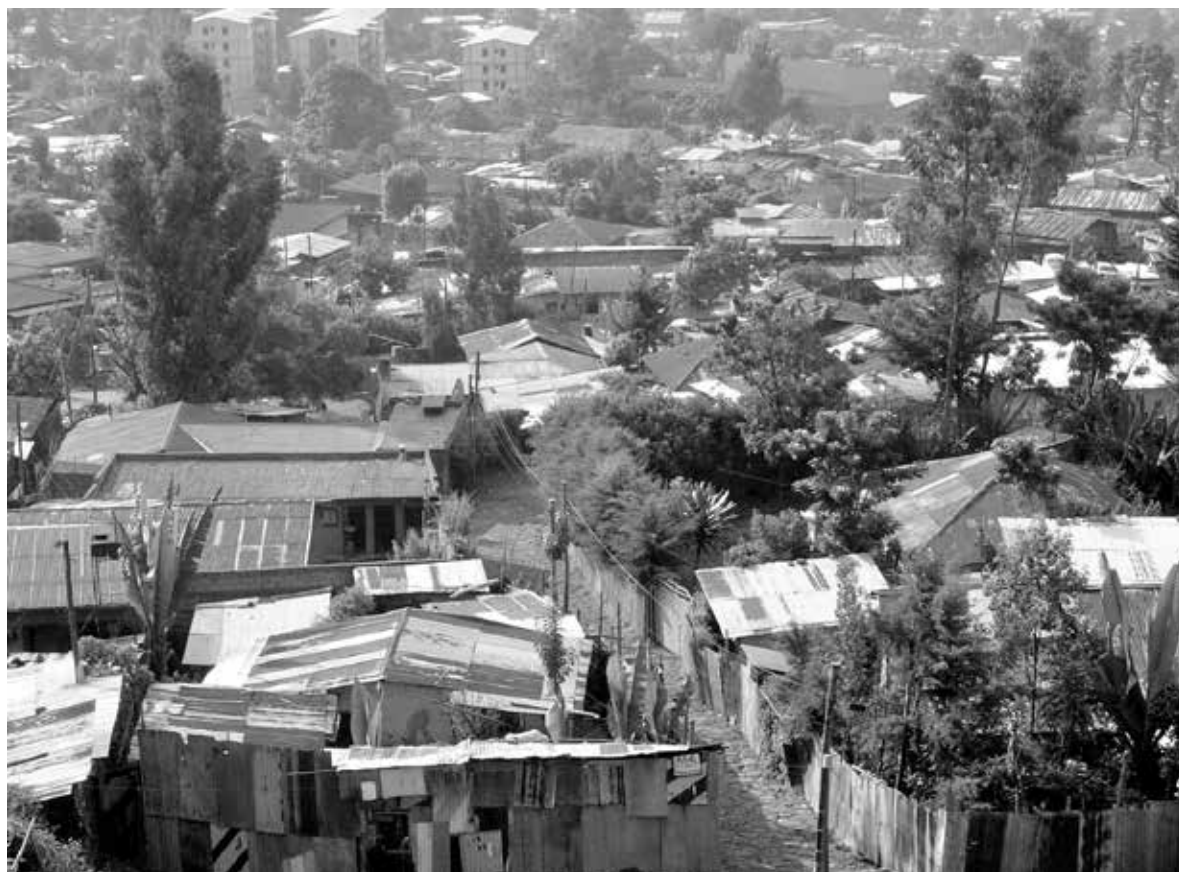
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▶ **Figure 6:** Middle-income, loan-supported houses, Cape Town, Photo: M. Wiebusch 2017



**Figure 7:** Traditional inner-city housing area, Addis Ababa, Arada district. Photo: M. Wiebusch 2009



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## Housing policy in Ethiopia

Until the beginning of the new millennium, Ethiopia's housing policy was directed towards informal-settlement upgrading measures mainly aimed at upgrading public infrastructure and less so the actual dwellings. Ethiopia is one of the least urbanised (but at the same time one of the most rapidly urbanising) countries in the world. This fact and the decreasing living conditions in the old, traditionally built 'kebele' houses [Figure 7] has led to a shift in policy. Since 2005, the government has turned to the mass production of condominiums within the Integrated Housing Development Programme (IHDP). The policy, which centres on ownership, from the start already raised questions about the poor living in the old, informal houses of which many had to be removed and replaced by condominiums (Fein & Lohnert 2009; Fein 2009).

Government-subsidised mortgages should ensure affordability of the flats. The scale of the rapidly growing, precariously housed urban population obviously supported many politicians and planners in their position that small-scale incremental upgrading would, on the one hand, not be suitable to address the dimension of the housing backlog but would, on the other, also hinder densification in growing cities. In-situ upgrading has been therefore largely left to private initiatives and NGOs. The state is the main player in the housing sector, controlling most of the rental accommodations and directing new housing projects. The financial configuration of the Integrated Housing Development Programme (IHDP) budgets a cross-subsidy between the smaller and bigger units to enable low-income households to acquire at least the smallest unit. As UN-Habitat (2010: 6) formulates: "[...] It is the case that the majority of Ethiopians cannot pay for formal housing supplied by the private market. Therefore, the greatest need is for affordable

housing." As in South Africa, the demand exceeds by far the supply. Therefore, applicants must take part in a lottery to acquire an apartment.

Apart from smaller alterations, which are attributed to topography, size and the envisaged density, the design of all housing projects is the same. The architecture is simple and functional, and the structures easily reproducible, as the components are standardised and prefabricated as far as possible. [Figure 8]

Studios and 1-3 bedroom units, including bathroom (shower, flush toilet) and a kitchen, are found in all IHDP complexes, as well as in commercial units. Communal buildings are now included, arising from experiences made during a pilot phase in which residents, e.g., slaughtered goats and sheep in the bathrooms and thus clogged up the pipes in some houses. Other needs that had not been thought of in the beginning also became apparent: the kitchens, for example, were by far too small for the preparation of traditional "injera" bread, and washing facilities for clothes or space for communal feasts were lacking. Communal buildings are now normally built in the courtyards of the condominiums.

Besides a number of shortfalls that relate to the quality of the structures and the according infrastructure, for some resettled condominium users it was difficult in the beginning to adapt to living upstairs, as is well illustrated by an interview quote: "Living on the second floor is for birds." Other cultural expressions like traditional baking of "injera", slaughtering for feasts, or jointly washing clothes have been facilitated by the building of communal facilities.

The use of communal facilities needs rules and regulations. Additionally, these always identical condominiums





Figure 8: Addis Ababa, Bole Gerji condominium site. Photo: B. Lohnert 2009

that now line the arterial roads of nearly all bigger cities in Ethiopia are criticised for creating a monotonous, boring, and de-vitalising urban fabric. In general, experiences show that the IHDP mainly serves the middle-class and not the poorest urban dwellers. More often than not, the poor people in the informal dwellings that have been removed for a new building site are not able to sustain even the cheapest unit in the subsequent condominium complex (Fein 2009, Fein and Lohnert 2009). Many, therefore, sublet their single living room and sleep in the kitchen to avoid homelessness. Also, a cutback in the quality of food and in school fees could be observed as a means to pay the rates.

## Conclusion

In both examples, affordability is a major aspect when it comes to adequacy. In contrast to South Africa (until now with fully subsidised housing), the Ethiopian government's policy does not yet address the reality of the really poor. Those addressed are mainly the upper to lower middle class who, relieved from their former conditions, gladly accept a 1-3 bedroom flat at an acceptable distance from their work place, and the single young urban professionals, who earn a decent salary and likewise approve of an independent, anonymous condominium lifestyle. State-delivered housing is to a great extent not affordable for many of the people that have their houses demolished to make way for the condominium developments. So, while Ethiopia is predominantly heading for the middle class, neglecting the needs of the very poor, South Africa has been addressing the poor and disadvantaged so far but neglecting the middle class.

Ethiopia and South Africa – two countries that couldn't be more different as far as their history, economy, political and social circumstances are concerned – are both actually moving towards state-controlled, mass-scale housing developments. This strategy was common in Europe in the

1950s, mainly in the aftermath of World War II, to provide millions of people who lost their homes either through destruction or flight with cheap and, most of all, rapidly built housing. In that case, it was predominantly rental. Many of those complexes, however, later became deprived areas with all respective problems.

Unlike the then social housing schemes in e.g. Germany, South Africa gives (or gave) weight to ownership as a means to stabilise the "poor", while Ethiopia supports the ownership of apartments through mortgages. Both countries are still struggling with a big and even increasing gap between supply and demand. Some solutions are too expensive, others, like incremental informal building, are not accepted by the states.

Urban housing will always be an arena of contest and negotiation. Circumstances, habits, lifestyle and values are constantly changing on the individual and group level, as are policies. Both examples show that there is no standardised solution, and that there will be none as long as social disparities prevail or are even increasing, and as long as the needs, values and lifestyle of urban dwellers are the drivers. The diverse needs and capabilities on the individual level as well as the political goals, financial means and planning capabilities all call for different solutions within the frame of environmental sustainability.

To conclude, there is no universal and timeless definition of adequacy. A careful operationalisation of adequacy on all levels, however, provides politicians, planners and people with a reference framework to be discussed and negotiated within the arena of urban housing provision. And, it is also the basis for planning, implementation and evaluation of housing programmes. Although referring to incremental building, John Turner's paradigm of the 1960s can be applied to our arguments: "Housing is a verb, not a noun!"

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# Semera: An Ethiopian Urban Centre from the Drawing Board

Leake Tesfamariam, Monika Wiebusch

## Semera – eine äthiopische Stadt vom Reißbrett

*Die Stadt Semera ist ein einzigartiges Experiment in der Stadtentwicklungsgeschichte Äthiopiens. Sie ist eine politisch geborene Planstadt und wäre aus sonstigen Gründen an dieser Stelle wohl nicht entstanden. Mit Verabschiedung einer neuen Verfassung wurden 1994 in Äthiopien administrative Reformen angestoßen, die das Land verwaltungstechnisch grundlegend umwandelten. Die neue Verfassung gibt vor, dass Äthiopien aus „Regionalstaaten“ bestehen soll, die nach „Sprache, Identität und dem Willen der betroffenen Bevölkerung“ organisiert werden müssen. Das zuvor überwiegend nomadisch lebende Volk der Afar bekam so erstmals einen eigenen Regionalstaat. Während andere neue Regionalstaaten meist bereits existierende urbane Zentren als Hauptstadt nutzen konnten, beschloss die Regierung des neuen Afar-Regionalstaats 1995 die Gründung von Semera als Regionalhauptstadt in bis dahin unbesiedeltem Raum. Trotz der strategischen Lage der Stadt an der Hauptstraße von Addis Ababa nach Djibuti dauerte es eine Weile, hier eine Entwicklung anzustoßen. Erst 2004 gab es einen Masterplan. Die Entwicklung Semeras war anfangs nur möglich durch die Existenz von Nachbarstädten wie Logia und Dubti, jeweils in ca. 10 km Entfernung, die den frühen Bewohnern eine Grundversorgung an Wohnungen, Märkten, Gesundheitszentren etc. boten. Bis 2011 wurde Semera von der Regionalregierung verwaltet, erst nach der Fusion von Semera mit Logia wurde im März 2011 eine eigene Stadtverwaltung eingesetzt, jedoch bis heute (Ende 2017) ohne kommunale Selbstverwaltung, wie sie das äthiopische Recht vorsieht: es gibt keinen Stadtrat und die Verwaltung arbeitet weiterhin nach den Vorgaben der Regionalregierung. Die Probleme einer Stadtverwaltung ohne ausreichende Finanzen und Personal liegen auf der Hand, und die bis heute als Wohnstandorte bevorzugten Nachbarorte üben einen bremsenden Einfluss auf die Entwicklung der neuen Regionalhauptstadt aus. Als Stadt vom Reißbrett birgt Semera damit sowohl Chancen als auch Risiken, aus denen andere urbane Zentren in Äthiopien lernen können.*

## Historical and political background

The decision to establish Semera as a new town in Ethiopia and as the capital city of Afar Regional State was made in 1995. This decision, the reasons behind it, and the long story of its implementation are examined in this article. [Figure 1]

To date, Ethiopia's population has remained predominantly rural. The share of the urban population, 19.9% in mid-2016, will probably not surpass 40% before 2050 (UNDESA 2014). Urban development in Ethiopia reflects the influences of the different political systems that have shaped the country as well as their approaches to land law and modernisation.

During the feudal system, the highland farmers and herders were organised in clan-like structures provided with traditional land rights. Aside of that, the land was privately owned by the emperor, his nobles (most of them Amharic), and the church (Hildemann & Fitzenreiter 2004: 127ff). Urban development was closely linked to the political system and hardly influenced the rural surroundings, e.g., Aksum and Gondar were the capitals of the respective kingdoms. Other cities emerged from the administrative provincial structures of the Amharic nobility. Only Harar, a very early Muslim centre, was based on trade.

The era of kings and emperors came to an abrupt and violent end in 1975 and was replaced by military rule, the Derg regime, which lasted for seventeen years (1975–1991). The military government was likewise replaced by violent force in 1991 by the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF). Starting with the so-called "transitional period" and continuing after the national elections in 1995, the present EPRDF government has been administering the country for over twenty-five years now (2017).

The three different regimes have influenced the country with different land laws as well as socioeconomic, constitutional, and administrative reforms. The military Derg regime did not substantially change the provincial structures of the feudal system. But with its socialist-oriented ideology, it pushed some reforms – particularly the proclamations that nationalised land – that transformed the country considerably.

90.5% of Ethiopia's population lived in rural areas in 1975 (UNDESA 2014). Thus, the nationalisation of rural land and the implementation of the rural land reform changed the political economy of the rural sector. The carrying capacity of the rural land of Ethiopia, a country with a population predominantly occupied in subsistence agriculture, was in decline due to increasing population and soil depletion. The law on rural land reform (The Provisional



Military Administrative Council 1975) specified that “a family” would be entitled to a piece of agricultural land; this contributed to early marriages and family-forming practices and a subsequent population increase. This strategy, in the longer run, resulted in a lack of farmland for the increasing population and contributed to an accelerated rural-urban migration, mainly in highland Ethiopia.

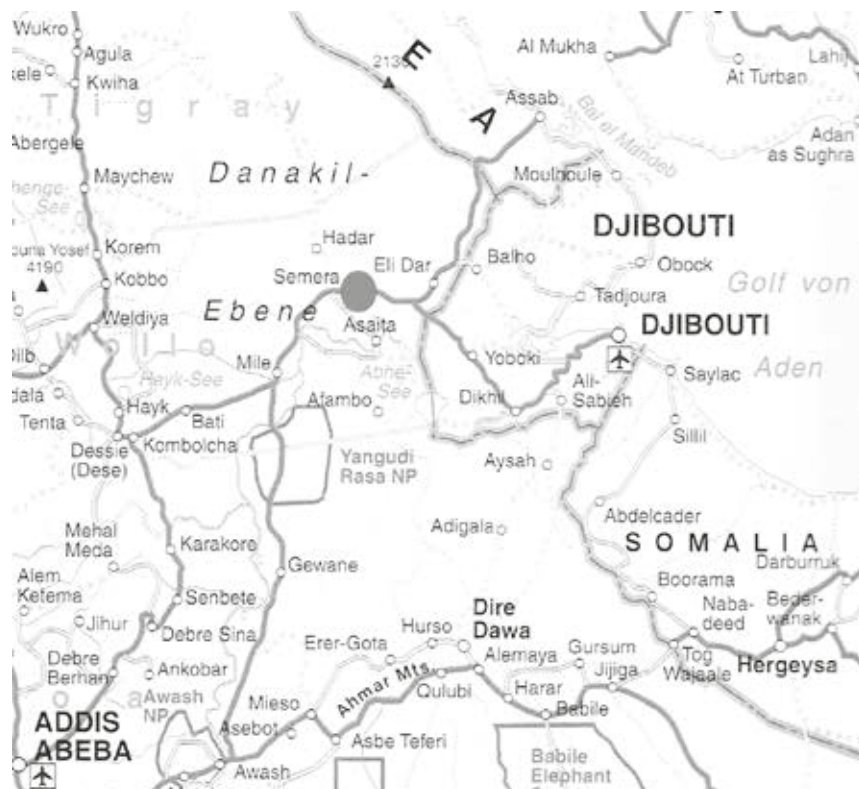
After the overthrow of the Derg regime, during the “transitional period” (1991-1995) of the EPRDF government, a new constitution was elaborated. For the first time in Ethiopian history, the various Ethiopian ethnic groups gained relevance. Articles 46.1 and 46.2 of the new constitution state: “The Federal Democratic Republic shall comprise of States. States shall be delimited on the basis of the settlement patterns, language, identity and consent of the peoples concerned.” (Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia 1994)

As a consequence, “new territorial identities” had to be identified, and new regional bodies and borders as well as new administrative structures were the outcome. Another consequence of the Constitution was a more decentralised governance system, with new powers for the new regional states.

### Afar – a new regional state carved out of former administrative regions

Even today, many Afar people still live a nomadic life. The new constitution considered the Afar people as a self-contained ethnic group for the first time in history, and included the provision of a separate regional state.

As there had been no Afar province or any other administrative structure representing the Afar people during the Imperial and Derg regimes, a new regional state had to be carved out of mainly three administrative regions. Afar Regional State was created by bringing together regions that had been, until then, within the former administrative regions of Tigray, Wello and Shewa; smaller portions are taken from Hararghe. [Figure 2]



### Administrative implementation of regional reforms

The territorial and administrative reforms that were implemented during the transitional period (1991-1995) and after the Constitution was put in place in 1995 resulted in a total transformation of the country's political “geography”; the territorial and administrative reforms went from the national to the regional-state level and even further down to the district level, “knocking down” hitherto known and traditionally cemented administrative structures. Following those reforms, new regional capitals emerged, taking away all the “privileges” that former capitals could have enjoyed; these reform practices were not always welcomed by the affected capitals and their residents.

▲ **Figure 1:** Location of Semera. Source: Hildemann and Fitzenreiter (2007), Mark for Semera: Monika Wiebusch

▼ **Figure 2:** Administrative regions of Ethiopia before 1991 (left) and after territorial reforms in 1995 (right). Source: Wikipedia.org



▲ **Figure 3:** The four emerging states. Source: Own graphic, based on Wikipedia.org

The devolution of state power to the “regional state” level is defined in the Constitution. Nevertheless, the intervention and influence of the federal government is not absent even on the local level. Four regional states (Afar, Ethiopian Somalia, Gambela and Benishangul-Gumuz) are so-called “emerging states”: their political and administrative experience is especially low, as when they were newly created they had no prior experience in provincial administration. They receive “special federal support” in the form of financial and administrative support, as well as other forms of intervention, when implementing development programmes. [Figure 3]

### **Semera – an urban centre from the drawing board as the new capital of Afar Regional State**

The traditional capital of the Afar people was Aysaita (Asaita, Asayita), located in a remote corner of the traditional Afar region and not far from the border with Djibouti. Located in the valley of the Awash River, it provided relatively convenient living conditions, while the Afar region is known for its desert climate. Aysaita was the seat of the traditional leaders of the Afar people, and this traditional function of the place still persists today.

Nevertheless, Aysaita is located far away from any relevant road – one reason to look for a new site for a capital when Afar Regional State was to be established (see Figure 4). Experience in other countries show, however, that political matters play the decisive role when opting for a new urban centre, be it as a capital of a nation or a capital of a regional state.

The rationale and decision-making process for the new capital at its present location has not been officially documented. There was a lengthy evaluating process considering other possible locations: Awash, at the southernmost tip of the regional state, was one of the considerations for the future capital – the peripheral position being the criterion for its exclusion in the end.

Semera, in contrast, is situated at a spatially central position from all directions within Afar Regional State, and is also on the Addis Ababa–Djibouti Highway. [Figure 4]

Immediately after the first national elections, the taking effect of the Constitution in 1995, and the inaugural meeting of the Afar Regional Council, the Council decided to make Semera its capital city in August 1995 (Radio Ethiopia 1995).

The site chosen for the new capital had so far been used by government institutions only: back in the 1970s, the Ethiopian Road Authority had established a road maintenance unit with a base camp on the south-western tip of present-day Semera, which was gradually followed by some private homes. These first settlers were ordered to leave the location by the military regime (1975 - 1991), which used the place as military garrison.

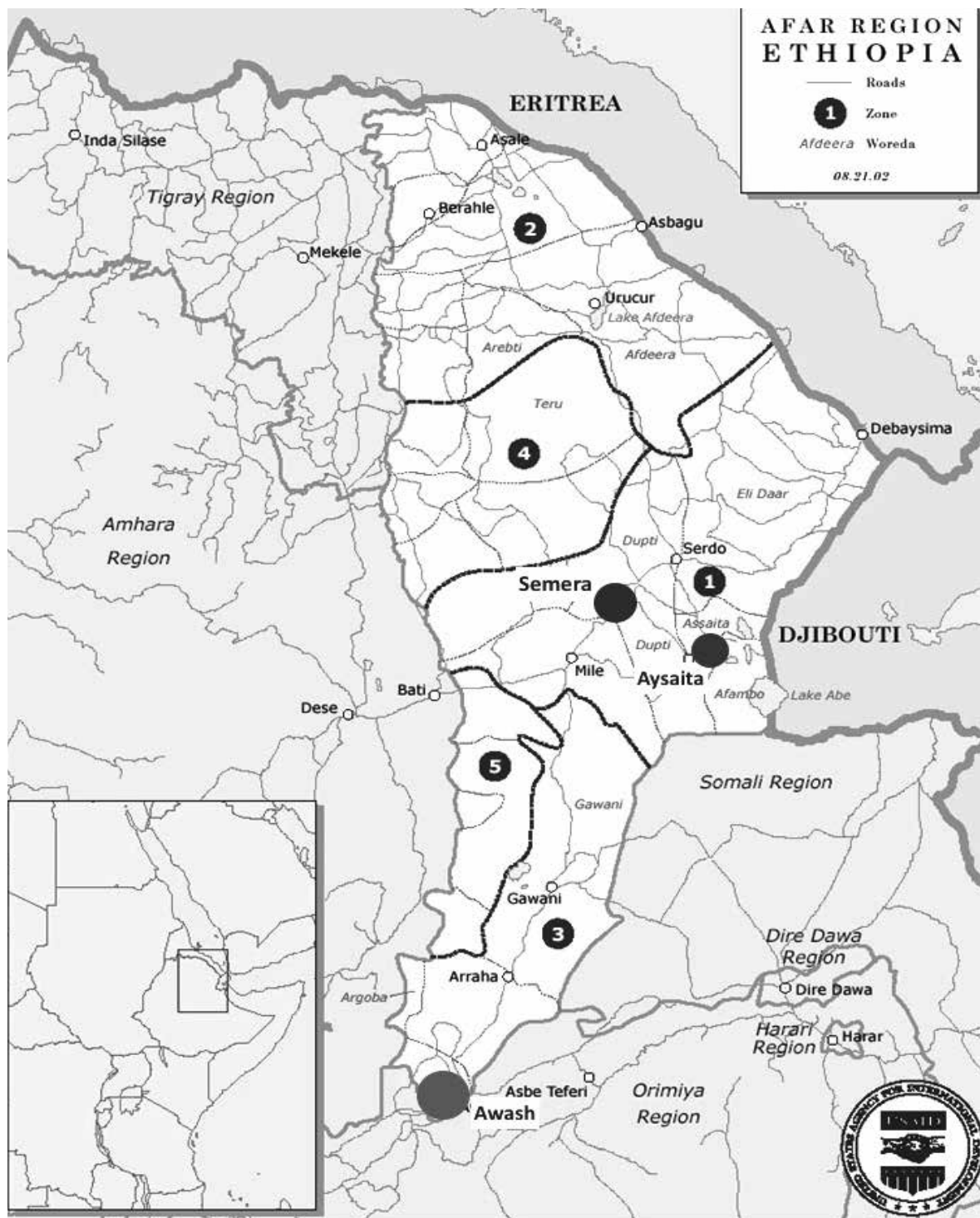
In the course of implementing the new regional states, several capitals of former administrative units lost their function and new capitals were established. Except for Hawassa (Southern Nations), Bahir Dar (Amhara), Harar (Harari) and Mekele (Tigray), no other current regional capital functioned as a capital before. The need for a “new beginning”, in the form of territorial and administrative reforms after the turmoil during the Derg regime, could have necessitated getting rid of “old traditions” and “old thinking” and giving way to new arrangements. Nevertheless, all present regional capitals, except Semera, were well-established urban centres with some degree of self-administration and with a somewhat established “culture” of municipal service delivery. When it comes to Semera, however, everything had to be literally created from scratch.

Over the past twenty years, it has become increasingly obvious that some crucial prerequisites have to be in place before creating and developing a new urban centre; the financial and technical aspects of such an undertaking, for example, play a major role. In fact: it was the existence of the urban centres of Dubti, a centre for cotton production since the 1960s, and Logia, positioned on the Addis Ababa–Djibouti highway, that made the Semera “experiment” possible. These settlements provided some basic infrastructure for the new capital during the first phase. [Figure 5]

After the decision to establish Semera as the capital city of Afar Regional State in 1995, the preparation of the master plan for Semera, as an urban centre from the drawing board, started in 1997 with data collection. The National Urban Planning Institute of Ethiopia (NUPI) used to prepare plans for local administrations upon their request, as long as the local administrations did not have the respective competences and capacities.

Nevertheless, Semera was a singular case: even though the town had been formally established in 1995, it had (almost) no population, no city administration, and no city council. The regional government administered Semera (until 2011) through the Bureau of Urban Development and Construction (BUDC), which also functioned as the client and addressee for NUPI in the planning phase.





**Figure 4:** Afar Regional State with the locations of Awash, Semera and Aysaita highlighted. Source: USAID 2002 with own additions

The first "Report on the Development Plan of Semera Town" was released in March 1998 (NUPI 1998). It discussed in depth the geological history and climatic characteristics of the area – a desert climate, Semera is situated in the Afar Depression, which lies at around 155 m below sea level – and indicated that the location would not be favourable for founding an entirely new urban centre that should, in some decades, be home to several thousand people.

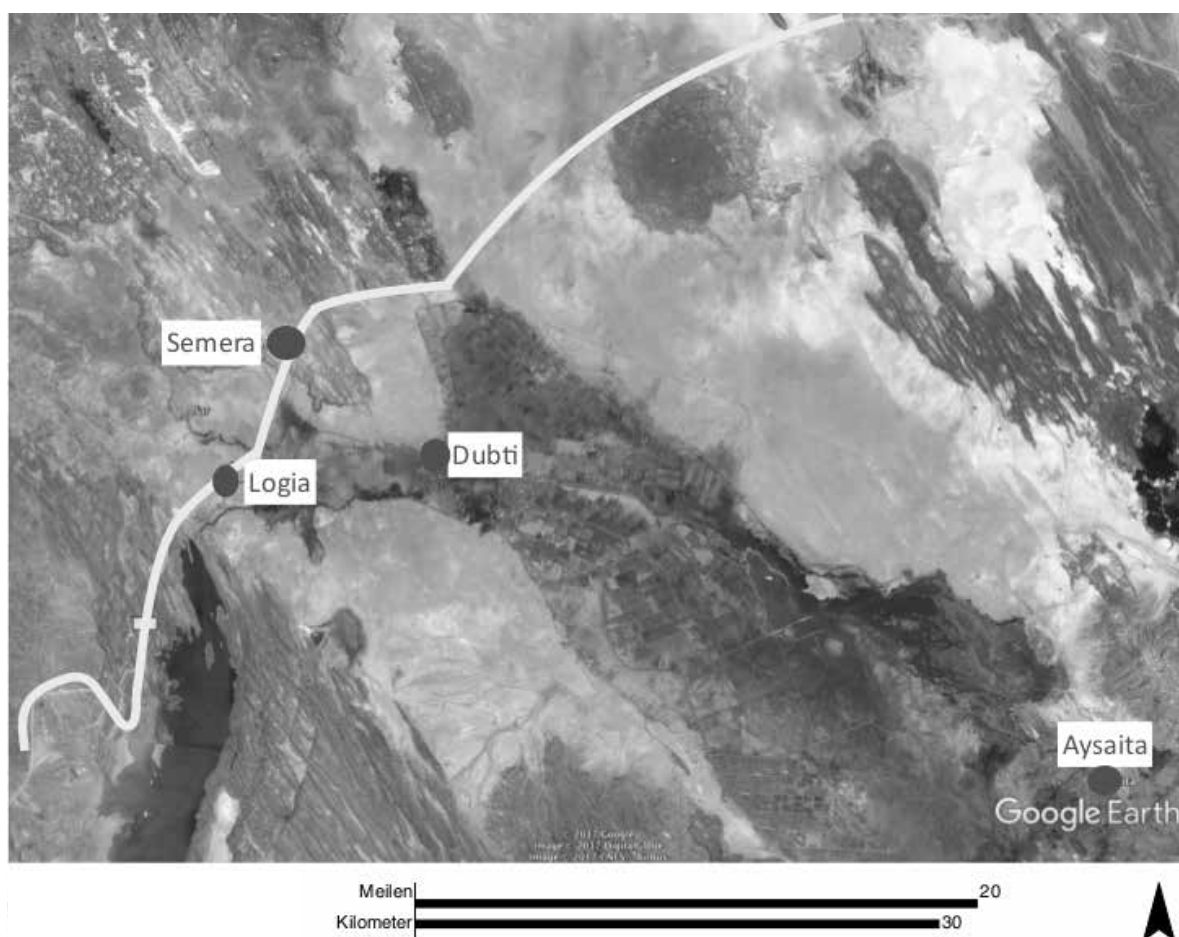
Nevertheless, the decision for Semera as capital city was kept and NUPI finished the elaboration of the master plan in 2004. The design (drawing) of the Semera Development Plan shows a somewhat round layout of the new urban centre, flanking the Addis Ababa–Djibouti Highway. The final "Report on the Development Plan of Semera Town"

(NUPI 2004) projected that about 7,000 people would be residing in Semera by 2007. [Figure 6]

The initial construction in the newly defined urban centre started before the urban design work of the master plan (NUPI 2004) was even finished. The regional government, namely, started constructing a few street blocks with primarily administrative buildings and two residential complexes for government employees as the initial homes of the new urban centre.

This is not unusual in the Ethiopian context: land is owned publicly, and thus the regional government has the opportunity and the right to define plots for its own needs. In the Semera case, the regional government also functioned as the caretaker administration for Semera

**Figure 5:** Semera and the nearby towns Dubti, Aysaita and Logia. Source: Own graphic on the basis of Google Maps 2017



city and could thus harmonise their construction needs with the master plan in process. [Figure 7]

Those first construction projects already highlighted the challenges for the new urban development: the government employees and their families preferred taking homes in the nearby towns of Logia and Dubti, as both towns already had long-established and “organically” grown urban structures with the crucially needed municipal services and such crucial urban functions as market places, transportation, and basic health services.

It became obvious that the new capital would not develop by its own means. To attract people to settle in Semera, and to create a “critical mass” for sustaining a regional-state capital, the regional government took various incentives and actions. Urban land for building homes and for investing in businesses, for example, was given away free of charge; many people bought plots and large chunks of urban land for commercial investment. Nevertheless, in the early years many were reluctant to do the required investments as there was no administrative pressure to do so. Thus, it was hardly visible if and how the town would develop.

To foster the process, the national government decided to establish a university in Semera under the framework of the Ethiopian University Capacity Building Programme (UCBP). Starting in 2005, the government established 13 public universities all over the country, Semera being one of those locations (GIZ 2016). The university site is located to the northeast of Semera Airport, affiliated north of the master plan (see Fig. 6). The first teaching programme in

Semera started in 2007, although the university only became operational after construction was completed in 2010.

A dry port facility, inaugurated in March 2010 and located about 6 km northeast of Semera on the highway to Djibouti, was expected to play a complimentary role in the development of the urban centre. Ethiopia is landlocked and most imports go through the port of neighbouring Djibouti. An Ethiopian government study in 2007 suggested constructing inland dry ports to save foreign currency from seaport expenses in Djibouti. The first subsequent dry port was constructed in Modjo, 80 km south of Addis Ababa, and went operational in 2009. Semera’s dry port, only 120 km off the Djibouti border, addresses the special needs of vehicle importers, who, in former times, had to store and prepare the cars for transport to Addis Ababa on car trucks in Djibouti’s port at high costs in foreign currencies.

Despite the activities of the national and regional governments to foster the growth of Semera by establishing relevant institutions (university, health centre, dry port), the population growth did not proceed as expected. The neighbouring towns of Logia and Dubti challenged Semera (see Fig. 5) with their established tradition, more pleasant locations on and near the Awash River, better living conditions, and already established urban facilities.

In 2011, the regional council drew the consequences and decided to create a joint city, Semera-Logia, with a then population of more than 20,000 inhabitants. The competition between the two towns should be changed towards



a joint development. Logia became the twin city of Semera in 2011. However, it remains the first choice for most people, regarding residential preference and other services and facilities, thus withdrawing the development dynamics of the newly created twin city.

## Decentralisation practices down to the local level

To better understand the administrative challenges for the new capital's development, it is necessary to look at the decentralisation policies in Ethiopia after 1995.

The Ethiopian state experienced extensive restructuring following the downfall of the military Derg regime in 1991, characterised by decentralisation practices down to the local level. The country had changed in many regards, and decentralisation in several forms and contexts was implemented; the most obvious and fundamental change of all was the delegation of state power to the new regional states and, further down, the local governments. The two former state forms (imperial and military) had been highly centralised with hardly any room for regional or local sentiments. The imperial and the military governments had practised tight governmental control, and had governed the provinces by assigning loyal appointees that were responsible to the central authority.

Since gaining state power, the Ethiopian People's Democratic Party (EPRDF) has embarked on transforming the country in many regards. The key to all endeavours can be considered the present Ethiopian Constitution, which stipulates wide-ranging rights to the previously non-existent regional states; decentralisation of state authority now experiences new competences, highlighting self-administration at the regional and the local level.

To provide a legal basis for the self-government of towns and cities, the regional states had to establish new "city proclamations": the legal and institutional framework that defines the criteria to becoming a city, as well as the subsequently corresponding powers and duties. The Afar city proclamation ("Proclamation 33/2006") was established in 2006 (Afar Regional Council 2006-1).

The proclamation to establish the Semera City Administration was adopted directly hereon as "Proclamation 34/2006", illustrating the relevance of the framework (Afar Regional Council 2006-2). Despite the proclamation, the regional administration, through the "Bureau of Works and Urban Development", remained the caretaker administration for Semera until 2011. Reasons for this are not documented.

Only after the decision to establish the joint city of Semera-Logia in 2011 was a new joint-city administration established; it started working in March 2011. Logia had had no city status before this, and used to be administered by the Dubti *wereda* administration (a *wereda* is comparable to a county). With the establishment of the Semera-Logia City Administration in 2011, the mayor and his cabinet were appointed by the regional government. Nevertheless, by summer 2017 a city council still had yet to be elected for Semera-Logia and the regional government was still the city's sovereign.



**Figure 6:** Semera Development Plan (master plan). Source: NUPI 2004, with own additions

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## Challenges for the new city administration

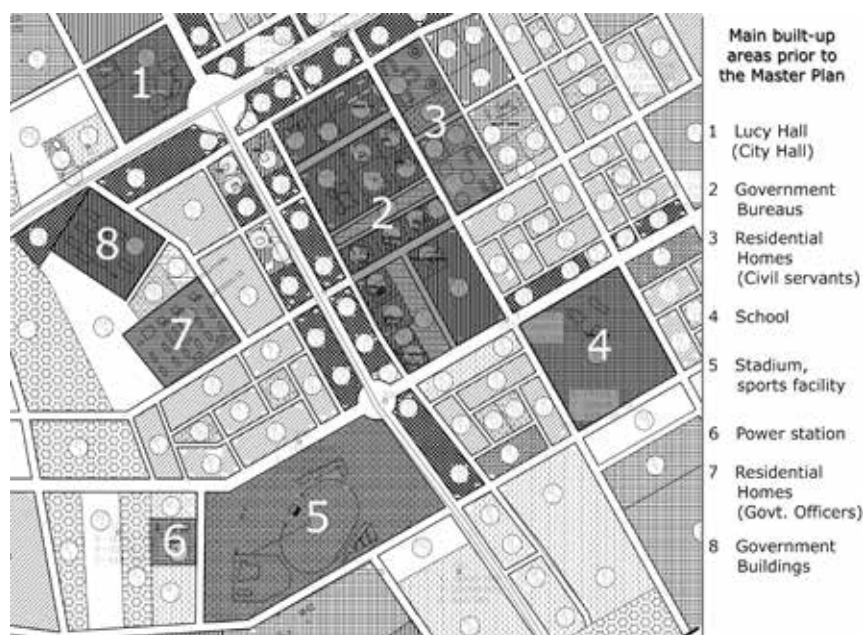
Two major challenges for the newly established city administration were:

- Staffing and institutional capacity building, and
- Financial revenues to run the business of the city.

Organising the city administration (functions and staffing) was the first major challenge. Especially issues regarding land administration and other municipal functions, duties and responsibilities had to be handed over from the Bureau of Urban Development and Construction (formerly: Bureau of Works and Urban Development) to the new administration. Administrative functions like health, education, security, etc. (so-called state functions) had to be handed over from the Dubti *wereda* administration. The initial workforce consisted of staff, delegated from different bureaus of the regional administration, assigned to commence work in the city administration while still on the regional administration's payroll.

One of the first activities of the new city administration was to address the owners of land rights (see above) in Semera and enforce construction by setting deadlines (provisions in the land-lease contracts allowed for withdrawal if the leaseholder did not finish construction on time).

The second major challenge for the administration was to secure the financial means to ensure a properly



**Figure 7:** Main built-up areas prior to the master plan.  
Source: Semera Development Plan with additional own graphic, Leake Tesfamariam

functioning of administration. Only in 2012 (one year after the Semera-Logia City Administration began operations) did the regional cabinet of Afar Regional State adopt a regulation on “Municipal Revenue and Tariff” enabling local governments in Afar Regional State to secure the financial means from within their jurisdiction.

Another crucial shortcoming is the missing city council, the members of which should be elected from among the residents. A city council is highly important as it has the duty and power to decide on matters that the city administration would have to implement. In the current situation, the regional cabinet makes the decisions and the mayor and his administration have to implement them.

### The way forward

Today, Semera-Logia is starting to play its role as the main urban centre providing services in the region close to the Djibouti border.

Most jobs in Semera are provided by the public sector, and the biggest share of the “purchasing power” of the public-sector employees is spent in Logia, mainly for housing and consumption. Logia has, therefore, benefited from the establishment of Semera as the capital of Afar Regional State. On the other hand, the development of the public sector in Semera (regional government and administration, university, health centre, airport, etc.) would not have been possible without Logia and Dubti providing the necessary infrastructure and housing. A bus terminal opened its services some years back in Semera, providing crucial transport services to and from the town.

The University of Semera has a continuously growing annual enrolment and, with its growing number of students and teachers, it plays an important role in the urban life of Semera-Logia. Over the course of the last few years, major private investments (e.g., hotels, commercial banks) have been undertaken mainly in Logia. The construction of business buildings and housing has increased remarkably, and this can presumably be

attributed to the economic role these two urban centres under one administration now play.

The role of the private sector is mainly confined to the service sectors of gastronomy and hotel business and commerce, both in Semera and Logia. Another equally important aspect in the private sector is the vehicle-servicing business, which is important for the transportation business to and from Djibouti. Support structure for the transport industry that ferries the bulk of Ethiopia’s import and export goods is provided both in Semera and Logia. Several gas stations and vehicle-repair shops exist, making the twin cities an important place in this regard.

Another crucial industry is “serviced” in Semera-Logia through commercial banking, equipment sales, and other technical support: the salt production in nearby Dobi and in Afdera (200 km to the north). After the conflict with neighbouring Eritrea terminated salt delivery through the harbour of Assab, Eritrea, in 1998, Logia gained importance as a support base and staging area for both salt-production sites. Today, most of the salt trade is organised and managed from Semera-Logia. Tourism to the volcano at Erta Ale (200 km to the north) and to some of the lakes bordering Djibouti is on the way to becoming an economic factor; visits to the volcano start from Semera-Logia in the colder months between October and March.

Until December 2014, Semera-Logia was the only regional capital with no regular flight connections. Thus, it was a major highlight when scheduled daily flights, connecting the region with Addis Ababa, started after an upgrade of the original gravel airstrip. An extension of the runway and the construction of a new passenger terminal are operational since December 2017 (Semonegna 2017).

The dry port facility on the road to Djibouti has not developed as expected. Even in 2016, most freight (70-80%) was handled in Modjo, 80 km south of Addis Ababa; that, as well as the fact that additional dry ports have been established in Ethiopia, means that Semera “is not used quite as regularly” (Regasa 2016: 25). Nevertheless, an industrial and commercial area is under development in the direct neighbourhood of the dry port. The future will prove whether this will help to facilitate economic activity and associated investments.

The area around Dubti and Aysaita has, over the last years, been transformed by the sugar industry. The Ethiopian Sugar Corporation has, among earlier investments, established the largest Ethiopian sugar factory near Aysaita, which started operations in 2014 with 25,000 acres of sugar cane to be cultivated by the corporation. In the future, an additional 25,000 acres are to be cultivated by farmers and pastoralists (Ethiopian Sugar Corporation 2017). A huge workforce is to be deployed to keep the sugar industry in the region running.

Recently, the first asphalted road connecting Semera with Dubti was built. This will improve road transportation between the towns and link Dubti to the airport. This will also make the urban land adjacent to the road highly attractive for potential investors, with land prices probably rising. But so far it is not clear how this development will affect Semera-Logia: Dubti, with its more attractive and greener environment on the Awash River, could also

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become a real competitor in attracting residents and businesses.

The “Nations, Nationalities and People’s Day”, the anniversary of the adoption of the Ethiopian Constitution, is celebrated each year in one of the different regional capitals. In November 2017, Semera-Logia hosted this event for the first time. This event is associated with big preparations and investments in municipal infrastructure such as roads, greeneries, etc. These should further enhance the socioeconomic role of the two urban centres. The future will prove whether the regional government, the city administration, and the private sector managed to exploit the event as an important milestone in the development of Semera-Logia.

However, urbanisation of Semera-Logia is mainly a result of migration from the highlands of Wello and Tigray, the areas from which Afar Regional State was mainly formed. The Afar people, most of them still living a pastoral life, provide the cities with livestock for meat consumption (goat and sheep) and get necessary merchandise in turn, thus strengthening the necessary urban-rural linkages.

## Conclusions

The background for the decision to create a new regional capital was principally political. The politically initiated necessity to have a new urban centre for a newly established regional state has, undoubtedly, different dynamics as compared to urban developments that are propelled by economic or social forces.

The establishment of Semera as the capital of Afar Regional State was a “bold” undertaking that marked the determination of relevant decision makers. It has been a chance and a risk at the same time, with many unknowns, some of them still not yet identified. The undertaking could have been a chance to gain experience and knowledge delivering urban management lessons that could have benefited other urban centres in the regional state. The risk, as witnessed in retrospect, is that several shortcomings (political, administrative, technical, financial, etc.) couldn’t be identified and addressed in time; thus, tackling problems ahead of their occurrence became difficult. A discrepancy between what was intended and what could be achieved is obvious. However, things could be corrected and a proper management of matters is still possible, as is a refocusing on the chances.

The regional government has been busy upgrading a number of urban centres within the regional states to a higher level of self-administration hierarchy. In 2012, the government adopted a regulation that defines the level and scope of the administrative authority assigned to the relevant urban centres gaining a self-administration status. Under the regulation, four levels of urban centres are identified on the basis of the importance and magnitude of the administrative function they would have; urban centres in the regional states are classified accordingly.

All efforts regarding the classification of urban centres in Afar Regional State according to their present level of development and their potentially possible administrative function could have profited from the experiences in Semera, regarding proper urban management. However,

the chances are not lost forever. As future tasks will likewise be challenging to cope with, there is still the possibility to handle matters properly.

One of the major challenges was the fact that the legal framework did not keep up with the political decisions: while the political decision for making Semera the capital of Afar Region was taken in 1995, the legal basis (Afar Region City Proclamation) only followed in 2006 (Ethiopian Ministry of Works and Urban Development 2007: 5).

However, once the necessary legal, technical, human, etc. aspects are in place, the political will and dedication to implement them efficiently remains crucial. Today, in 2018, Semera-Logia still doesn’t have a city council, thus making the city administration dependent on the political decisions of the regional government. Any sort of public participation is missing, as the platform for accommodating such participation is not formally in place. There is no official political, administrative or technical reason as to why a city council could not be established. One could speculate, though, as to why it to date still hasn’t materialised: it would mean that the regional government would lose some power at the local level (city administration) and would therefore have less authority.

Semera will only start becoming a centre for economic development and job creation once service delivery of the most crucial requirements – i.e., electricity, water, public transport – is guaranteed and affordable. This is only possible by using the synergies between the existing town of Logia and the new urban centre. An efficient and effective urban service delivery needs an administration that is committed to providing it. This means that a devoted administrative staff can move things and ensure the implementation of this huge task.

Major investments in national and regional institutions (gravel airstrip, regional government and regional administration, university, health centre) were carried out without a responsible city administration in place. And it took until 2011 for the regional government to draw consequences and decide to link the Semera-Logia development into one joint city and establish a city administration.

With the increasing urbanisation and growing population, the function as an urban centre must be assessed and the necessary interventions properly conducted so that future demands are met on time. One of these measures, clearly, would be the revision of the structure plan (master plan) for the joint city of Semera-Logia to address and assure a sustainable development on time. The financial planning and other relevant policies need to be adjusted to fulfil the function as a regional capital (with support from the regional government). Only well-managed funds can ensure the proper operation of the administration.

An assessment of what has been achieved so far and what could realistically be targeted as future objectives would put the way ahead on the right track. Proper urban management and development would contribute significantly to the development of not only Semera-Logia, but also to the whole Afar region – a region that has not been on the gaining side so far, even by Ethiopian standards.



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# Placing Everyday Urbanisation at the Heart of Ethiopian Urban Policy

Nadine Appelhans\*

**Alltagspraktiken der Urbanisierung als Ausgangspunkt für Stadtentwicklungsstrategien in Äthiopien**  
2030 wird auch in Äthiopien ein Drittel der Bevölkerung in Städten leben. Durch interne Migration wächst der Bedarf an Wohnraum und Infrastruktur. Trotz einer Nationalen Stadtentwicklungsstrategie (2005) sind Bau- und Ansiedlungspraktiken größtenteils inkrementell geblieben. Selbstbau, kleinteilige Produktion und Handwerk sowie urbane Landwirtschaft bestehen in den Stadt(erweiterungs)gebieten fort, etablieren sich neu und dienen der Subsistenzwirtschaft. Am Beispiel der Stadt Bahir Dar beschreibt dieser Artikel das Verhältnis zwischen formeller Stadtplanung und Alltagspraktiken der Urbanisierung. Im Rahmen einer Fallstudie werden vier Nachbarschaften in Bahir Dar als Beispiele für historische Phasen der jüngeren äthiopischen Geschichte untersucht: die Innenstadt als Gründungskern aus dem 16. Jahrhundert; das Gebiet um eine Textilfabrik, errichtet nach dem zweiten Weltkrieg; ein Dorf, saisonaler Wohnort für Viehzüchter schon vor den 1960er Jahren und unter den Sozialisten dauerhaft besiedelt; sowie der Universitätscampus, entstanden um 2000 mit einigen tausend Studierenden und Beschäftigten. Bei Aushandlungen um staatliche Interventionen gibt es viele Gewinner auf Seiten der Bevölkerung. Die Fallstudie zeigt jedoch, dass bei Umnutzung und Verdichtung bereits benachteiligte Bevölkerungsgruppen durch weitere Marginalisierung bedroht sind. Der Artikel empfiehlt, bestehende Alltagspraktiken zum Ausgangspunkt der Stadtentwicklungsstrategien zu machen. Das bedeutet eine Abkehr von konventionellen Annahmen zu Bevölkerung, Nutzung, Sesshaftigkeit, geregelter Arbeit, etc. hin zur Förderung von Diversität, der Berücksichtigung temporärer Wohnformen, inkrementeller Bauweisen und lokaler Wissensproduktion

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## Urban growth in Ethiopia

Currently, Ethiopia's levels of urban population are among the lowest in the world. According to the latest census, 83.9% of the total population lived in the rural areas, mainly as small-scale farmers (CSA 2008: 19). Only 16.1% of the inhabitants lived in Ethiopian cities (ibid.). However, the Ethiopian population is rapidly growing. The low level of urbanised population is about to increase and will eventually make up about a third of the total population: the UN extrapolates the figures of urban residents from 10.4% in 1980 to a projected 27.4% in 2030 (UN-Habitat 2008: 171). The total size of the urban population is, thereby, expected to almost triple within a time span of five decades. Paired with patterns of internal migration, pressure on Ethiopia's cities is growing and new demands for housing and infrastructure are arising. Within urbanisation, the (re-)distribution of resources between rural and urban Ethiopia is a hot topic and at the centre of violent conflict (see *The Guardian* 2016). Regarding its impetus for political action, the impact of rapid urban growth is, hence, contested and controversial but not openly discussed.

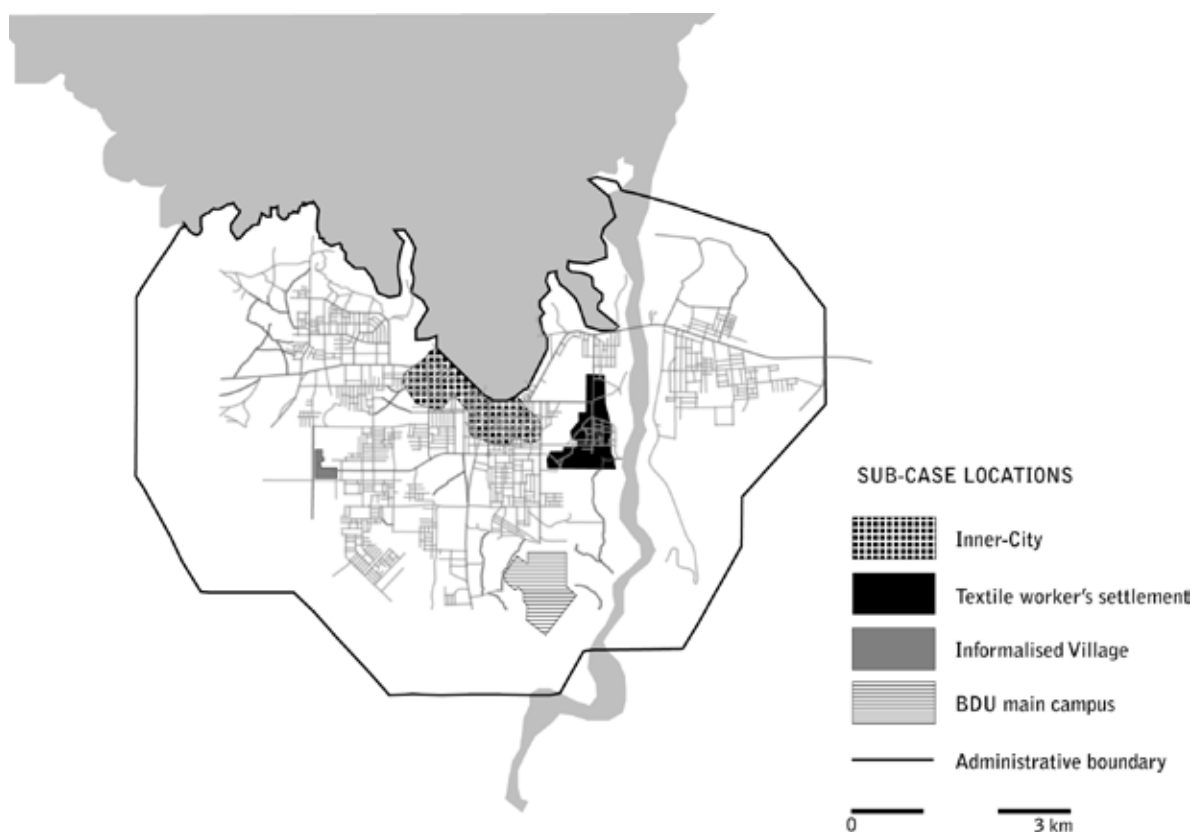
Urban policy and urban planning in Ethiopia have what Anthony King (2003) has termed a "transnational planning history". Thus, hardly anything is known about the contingent quality of urban growth across Ethiopia's cities – who are the population groups coming into the specific towns, where do they stay, why do they come, what facilities do they require? Instead, policy responses have been general, and initiated from the national level. Despite noticeable population influx to the urban areas, the national

government first devised an urban policy in 2005 (Ministry of Federal Affairs 2005). After several decades of anti-urban politics, this urban policy issued by the Ministry of Works and Urban Development lay the foundation for the "Plan for Accelerated and Sustained Development to End Poverty (PASDEP)", in which the "Plan for Urban Development and Good Governance" operationalizes development aims for urban areas into specific measures (Ministry of Works and Urban Development 2007). Most notably, a large-scale housing programme targets the rising demand for housing units within Ethiopian cities (Ministry of Federal Affairs 2005: 30). The policy further aims at the systematic provision of large-scale infrastructure (e.g., for electrification, communication, and mobility) in urban areas (Ministry of Federal Affairs 2005, Ministry of Works and Urban Development 2007, Gagliardone 2014). To coordinate the measures on municipal level, structural and local development plans were adopted as a tool for the urban development of Ethiopian cities (Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia 2008).

The implementation of "modern" urban development visions is facilitated by the fact that there is no private land ownership in Ethiopia. In 1975, during socialist rule, all land was nationalised and expropriated from private owners (Koehn 1979: 229, Liyew Adamu 1994: 22, Solomon Mulugeta 1997, Crewett et al. 2008: 12). All land still remains in the hand of the state today.

The ideals behind the urban policy agenda are rooted in development principles and guided by technical standards and visions of modernity (Ministry of Works and Urban





**Figure 1:** Bahir Dar, Ethiopia. Sub-case sites. Image by the author, first published in Appelhans 2017

Development 2007). Yet, despite these efforts for modernisation, self-constructed shelters, small-scale manufacturing and urban agriculture persist and continue to arise on (temporarily) vacant urban areas. This suggests that there are housing needs and spatial demands that current urban policy does not cater for. Significant parts of the population are obviously not able or not eligible to enter the mechanisms of housing provision and, consequently, are not in a position to acquire formal access to basic infrastructure. Administration and international donors have been labelling many of the historical and newly arising living areas as “slums” on the grounds of technical criteria and propose their eradication (see UN-Habitat 2007: 22, Ministry of Works and Urban Development 2007: 4). Instead of following this course, this article takes a deeper look into the mundane urbanisation practices and recommends placing them at the centre of urban planning. The descriptions are taken from a PhD project, which conducted a case study on the urban development of Bahir Dar (Appelhans 2017).

### Everyday urbanisation in four Bahir Dar neighbourhoods

Diverging from the Urban Planning Proclamation, Bahir Dar’s municipal development is not undertaken by a structure and a local plan, but rather an “integrated development plan” called the Bahir Dar Integrated Development Plan (BDIDP) (FUPI 2008). As part of a pilot initiative, the concept of the South African Integrated Development Plan (IDP) was adopted to the local requirements (FUPI 2008, Berrisford 2012). Despite the strong local adaptation, the introduction of IDPs to Ethiopia has to be viewed as an international policy transfer. In its current form, statutory urban development in Ethiopia can, therefore, be referred to as a “worlding practice” of urban development (Roy 2011). According to the 2007 census, the town of Bahir Dar had 180,174 inhabitants (World Bank 2016: 9). In 2007, more

than 10% of the population had been living in town for less than one year (World Bank 2016: 45). Out of the city’s housing stock of 51,744 units, the 2007 census describes 42,443 as being made of clay and mud, most also with a mud floor and corrugated iron sheet roof (World Bank 2016: 35f). The buildings are usually single-storey structures. The settlement, building, and livelihood practices associated with these small-scale structures hence have to be understood as practices of the majority.

In a case study, four different neighbourhoods of Bahir Dar were subject of research to establish site-specific qualitative aspects of the city’s urban growth. The four neighbourhoods chosen were: the inner-city area, the textile workers’ settlement, an informalised village<sup>1</sup>, and Bahir Dar University’s main campus. [Figure 1] They were selected according to four historical development phases of the city (see Appelhans 2017: 182). The downtown area is the founding area of the settlement and dates back to the 16<sup>th</sup> century (Seltene 2003: 442). The area around the textile mill was constructed after the Second World War. The informal settlement was a traditional grazing area that was already permanently occupied during the socialist era. The university campus, however, is being expanded under the current government’s policy. The sources for the description of the neighbourhoods and their everyday rationales of urbanisation are in-depth interviews conducted on the sites, observations from cross-section walks, and material from literature review (Appelhans 2017: 80). The biographical accounts of residents from the different neighbourhoods give account of their everyday life in regard to urbanisation practices.

### Downtown

Bahir Dar’s historical city centre is a de-jure commercial zone (FUPI 2008) but de-facto mixed-use area in which a large variety of building styles and land uses have

**1** The settlement was declared informal on the grounds of zoning and building regulations for the city’s plans to expand onto this land.

► **Figure 2:** Low-rise, mixed-use structures are being substituted by multi-storey commercial-use buildings downtown. Image by the author



accumulated, while lifestyles are diverse. [Figure 2] The shoreline with harbour and tourism facilities, market area, retail spaces, ritual spaces and large religious buildings, administration offices, and entertainment and red-light district are some of its most defining features. Due to the nearby bus stop and ferry landing, downtown is also the arrival point for many migrants coming into town (Appelhans 2017: 159). Forms of migration to Bahir Dar are diverse. Next to permanent moves, there are also spaces accommodating temporary stays, such as seasonal or circular migration, as well households with multi-local set-ups. Migration is not only a recent phenomenon, but has been going on ever since the establishment of the settlement. Consequently, the downtown area displays a wide array of social, ethnic, and religious groups and income typologies across the national scale. While some families have been residing here for several generations and live in

**Figure 3:** Housing supplied to the higher officials of the textile factory. Image by the author



municipal houses or their own property, the recent arrivals are dependent on other living arrangements. Those without other accommodation can find shelter in a number of informal hostels in private homes of the neighbourhood. These informal arrangements substitute the lacking formal accommodation for new arrivals and temporary residents in Bahir Dar. Meanwhile, the overcrowded shelters add to the strain on the limited infrastructure and resources.

The use of space in the city centre is contested. Beyond formally provided housing and shops for traders and investors, the area provides opportunity for informal ambulant business (vending and service) and daily labourers in the public space, as well as small-scale workshops and catering businesses in home-production and the multiple use of space. Working and living occupy the same space, and household members are often engaged in a number of activities for income generation. They thereby also combine formal work with informal income generation.

The inner city can, therefore, be viewed as a simultaneously dense historic structure with a high frequency and diversity of opportunities and, also, as a fluctuant space due to temporal occupation and appropriation (ibid.: 160). Yet, these practices have not been acknowledged by urban development policy and the historical centre is under strong investment-led development pressure. According to the *kebele* upgrading schemes, which are part of Bahir Dar's Integrated Development Plan (FUPI 2008), the small-scale dwellings, retail spaces, and workshops in the downtown area are to be substituted by multi-storey commercial use. These will not be suited to accommodate rural-urban migrants, daily labourers, and other low-income residents and will mainly supply retail space and rental apartments. Mixed-use concepts have not been explored in the Integrated Development Plan (Appelhans 2017: 113).

### Textile settlement

Constructed alongside the textile factory, the textile village [Figure 3] was an arrival area for textile workers (Berhanu 2012: 29). The area's designation as a purely residential zone is reflected in the IDP (FUPI 2008). This designation is based on assumptions of segregated living and working areas as found in economies with industrial production. After being populated by a wave of labour migration from the rural areas with the rise of the factory, it remains a residence for many factory workers and their families. The residents can enjoy the various learning and leisure facilities of the area. The settlers' structure is rather homogeneous, with a majority of middle-income Amhara Orthodox residents and some (highly) qualified residents recruited for the factory from outside the Amhara National Regional State. The long-term residents are socially and economically established through work in the factory and have appropriated their living space. Many residents have long-term leases on their plots and own their houses, which are single or two-storey detached family homes constructed from quality material (stone foundations, clay or concrete structures). The (relatively few) new arrivals to the area are often highly skilled experts for the textile mill and their families. Rental housing is accessible for these factory-related new arrivals, but the tenants see this as a temporary set-up and aim to acquire their own houses. However, entering the ownership system for new arrivals



– even highly educated employees of the textile factory itself – is difficult, as the historical arrangements of access to plots have been discontinued in this area and there are presently no plots available in an equivalent to the former worker's privilege to housing (Appelhans 2017: 161). Due to this, the urban design of the neighbourhood remains relatively unchanged and lacks the development dynamic that can be observed in the heterogeneous mixed-use neighbourhoods of Bahir Dar.

### Urban village

The area of this neighbourhood was first populated by pastoralists that settled seasonally for grazing. Settlement here was first undertaken more than four generations ago. The settlement, however, gradually became permanent and increased in density. While this neighbourhood is Christian, there are other village-like neighbourhoods in town that are Muslim (see Ajala 2008).

The houses are traditional round huts with straw roofs mixed with more recent cubic clay and wood houses, forming small-scale settlement structures. The houses are self-constructed according to traditional building techniques, are expanded when there is need for more space, and can be self-maintained by the occupants. [Figure 4] In comparison to the modern developments, the urban village displays a high flexibility towards changing environmental conditions. The housing structures are not dependent on imported material such as concrete and rely largely on renewable resources.

The neighbourhood is informally governed by traditional rules of land sub-division that stand in competition to the formal, legal land-tenure system (see Berrisford 2011). Thereby, the tenure in the informal village relies on the decision of elders that are recognised as community leaders by the residents to subdivide plots and allocate land to the young and to new arrivals. While traditional livelihoods and family-related settlement patterns continue in these locations, the low cost of living also makes it receptive to urban arrivals with low financial resources. They settle in vacant houses or find space to insert new informal structures (Berrisford 2011).

Apart from dwelling, the older occupants mainly use the land for subsistence activities, which are complemented by incomes from trade, services, foraging, mining and gathering, home production or revenues from agricultural land held in the countryside (Appelhans 2017: 161). The younger generation has diversified its livelihood strategy. It has invested in entrepreneurial activities and engages in formal and qualified wage labour outside the village-like neighbourhood. The continuous traditions of the community are, hence, complemented by innovation and receptive to modernity. However, the land is increasingly attractive to commercial investment and will be vacated for development.

### Bahir Dar University main campus

Despite the scholarly attention on the newly arising residential neighbourhoods in urbanisation, schools, universities and churches are important reception structures for incoming migrants to Bahir Dar. During their stay, students spend most of their time on campus and are fed



Figure 4: A traditional *tukul* house on the site. Image by the author

and housed on the compound. Teaching staff can also live on campus. Entering the academic programmes is a highly selective process. The students come as temporary residents, with the fixed idea of completing a degree in Bahir Dar, and subsequently either move from campus back to their places of origin or take on job offers in other towns. While the students are homogenous in their age group, their cultural and economic backgrounds are highly diverse, covering all status groups and regions of the country. The students consider the campus a safe environment, due to the rules of social conduct in place. [Figure 5]

Yet, as the opportunity to study or teach could have just as well arisen in another university town within or outside Ethiopia, the attachment to the city or engagement with its residents is generally low for many students and academic university employees (Appelhans 2017: 162).



Figure 5: Bahir Dar University is expanding onto various sites across town. Image by the author

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**Figure 6:** Vending of urban agriculture produce. Image by the author



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The university campus, hence, stands for an enclosed neighbourhood typology for which the building practice does not constitute an everyday activity. Instead, urbanisation here is practised through cohabitation, as well as cultural and formal education. Since off-campus activities and subsequent residency in town after the completion of studies are not actively encouraged, life on the BDU campus remains somewhat isolated from the rest of Bahir Dar City, thereby also restricting the diffusion of knowledge (Appelhans 2017: 157, 162).

## Qualities of everyday practice

As the descriptions from the four neighbourhoods indicate, local path dependencies have created contingent structures and practices as well as distinct relations between different rationales of everyday urbanisation in the neighbourhoods (Appelhans 2017: 167). Currently, the described practices of everyday urbanisation and their material outcomes and framings are politically viewed as competing rationales to statutory planning. Hence, state landownership could be an opportunity to pursue urban development in the interest of the residents. However, current developments are mostly not undertaken in negotiation with the residents in place. Here, state landownership facilitates the clearance of settlements and relocation of residents for urban expansion by the administration (Fereya Abdissa and Terefe Degefa 2011) or the substitution of existing urban structures with the construction of modern structures within development plans. Such relocation practice is common and justified by the authorities (Pankhurst and Piguet 2004). Although the resettlement process produces winners and losers through the compensation schemes, long-term residents in such structures hardly challenge eviction orders from their homes in historical inner-city neighbourhoods. While certain individuals do gain from relocation by gaining access to homeownership, individuals who informally occupy (and are not compensated) or are not able to relocate (for health, business, or family reasons) lose out in

relocation (see Appelhans 2017: 136). While seeking to modernise, it is therefore vital to overcome and address issues of marginalisation arising in the practices. Therefore, it is useful to look at four key features of everyday urbanisation: diversity, temporary residence, incremental building, and knowledge production. The following section explains which qualities these everyday practices add to urban living. [Figure 6]

## Diversity

Urban residence offers an opportunity to engage in income generation for people in a wide range of social and education backgrounds. This reflects in the diversity of cultures and lifestyles that is found in the city. Culturally mixed neighbourhoods allow for meaningful interaction between a range of residents, thus furthering cosmopolitan attitudes towards difference. Thereby, it is common that individuals unite a variety of identities in their person, leading to engagement in a wide spectrum of practices. The lecturer is also a consultant, the teacher a salesperson, the street kid a maid. Responsibility for the family income is also distributed across family members, leading to a widened range of income opportunities combining traditional men's jobs with women's work. According to the specific household needs, the spaces occupied by the population accommodate the diversity of commercial and cultural practices by providing for multiple-use. The multiple practices are mostly accommodated within the living space. During the daytime, the rooms function as shops, meeting rooms or production sites, while they turn into family homes at night. Yet, service provision for multiple-use and incremental upgrading of mixed-use areas is not part of the development visions of the BDIDP.

## Arrival and temporary residence

The different neighbourhoods differ in their accessibility to newcomers and each offer different types of opportunities for entering income generation and subsistence. While there was a time when industry (the textile mill) attracted labourers from the rural areas with the promise of formal employment, the area is now the least diverse among the four sub-case sites when it comes to land-use diversity. In contrast, the highly dynamic arrival area in the city centre displays a large diversity of population backgrounds and activities, while the informal village and the university, each in its own way, are very recipient to population influx and devise professional activities. Across the neighbourhoods, the observations indicate that assumptions on rural-urban migration are not as linear as assumed in conventional narratives of "urbanisation". The residents' accounts show that urbanisation, as growth as well as a cultural and socio-economic transformation, is triggered by more than just push factors in the countryside. The narratives of the interviewees during data collection suggest that their move to the city, their engagement with local space in Bahir Dar, and their use of building materials are all strongly defined by the desire to secure the individual or household livelihood and improve resilience for the immediate family by diversifying their livelihood. Therefore, patterns of rural-urban migration to Bahir Dar are often non-linear. They are temporary, circular, or seasonal. Leaving the rural areas often does not mean cutting the bond to the area of origin but, rather, embracing a multi-local strategy of income generation within the



family. When arriving in town, access to housing is often not gained through formal markets and housing provision but, instead, through personal arrangements in which one takes in another person. These are not necessarily only family relations but also professional set-ups of sub-letting. These arrangements are flexible and well suited to practices of temporary migration.

### Incremental building practice

Clay and wood are comparatively cheap, easily available, and good to maintain and therefore still a common form of construction for private homes. As stated earlier, more than 82% of the city's housing stock of 2007 was made of these materials (calculation based on World Bank 2016: 35). Yet, the small-scale, traditional building style is not in line with the BDIDP's vision of high-density development. Although there is no recent data available, it has to be assumed that the majority of Bahir Dar's inhabitants are still not able to construct according to building regulations due to cost factors (see Gebeyaw Walle 2003: 42). Instead, most buildings are constructed in increments, thus the establishment and improvement of buildings is conducted in small steps over long periods of time. Incremental building practices are compatible with the irregular availability of building material or low monetary incomes. However, also large-scale projects and multi-storey buildings made of concrete are constructed in this phased manner. Thereby, this process has flexibility not only in the construction process, but really also in the design. The incremental building practice often goes along with modular designs that are adapted to suit the changing spatial needs of the occupants over various decades. Flexibility is thereby spatial and temporal.

### Knowledge production

Urbanisation is not only urban growth in population figures and spatial expansion, but also a cultural transformation from a largely rural population to an increasingly urban society. Within this process, different types of knowledge production regarding the process of urbanisation itself occur. In the course of urbanisation, embracing novelty to accompany the progress and allow invention is crucial. On the one hand, there are individual learning processes. These include, for example, the learning of social conventions particular to the city and distinct from the rural setting. On the other hand, there are institutional learning processes. Thereby, formal or informal institutions (such as the university or community elders) acquire insights on changing conditions and how to change conditions in the course of urbanisation, making use of these insights in various manners. The issues of living in diversity and regarding gender equality, for example, are currently explicitly addressed on campus as one of a few places for urban arrivals. Furthermore, knowledge from research on the local urban environment could be stronger, benefited from in urban development. However, this knowledge gain is often not sufficiently documented and, in the cases where it is, it is not particularly accessible for the benefit of Bahir Dar as a city.

### Inclusive implementation strategies

Although the everyday practices in Bahir Dar are differentiated and display a range of qualities securing resilience

of low-income households, the conventional urbanisation practices are not considered in the formal planning instruments. With its single-use zoning and the sophisticated building regulations, the BDIDP sets standards that inhibit or prevent the inclusion of various mundane urbanisation practices. It thereby might unintentionally contribute to further marginalisation of the urban poor, who have no access to state housing, can't afford to build according to standard, or have trouble meeting the regular payments for rent or services. Derived from the insights on the qualities of everyday urbanisation, I argue for urban development approaches based on existing practices. A variety of everyday practises need to be legitimately acknowledged not as an alternative, but as co-existent to statutory urban planning in Bahir Dar's urban development. Hence, it is imperative for statutory planning and everyday urbanisation to build synergetic relations for inclusive development.

Referring to the four neighbourhoods introduced as part of this article, it is evident that the different neighbourhood contexts require different approaches to development. Since there is not much experience with institution-led urban development in Ethiopia, pilot projects can explore as to how a wider range of needs can be accommodated while improving livelihood conditions for a diversity of neighbourhood residents.

The proposal for the downtown area includes the introduction of *mixed-use zoning* (see Appelhans 2017: 211). The aim of introducing a mixed-use zoning category in land-use planning is to maintain the diverse typologies of housing and income opportunities in the city centre. Rather than focusing on the commercial potential of the inner-city, the diversity of the area is acknowledged as its strength and the mix of de-facto land use is acknowledged in formal planning. Thereby, livelihood strategies found in this area – such as subsistence agriculture, home production, foraging, small trade, and bartering – can be fully accepted as part of city life. Designating space for these activities and keeping people in place (avoiding resettlement) should be a high priority, as relocation presents a risk for the poor and frail – the most vulnerable residents. Instead of relocation, a synergetic approach to tackling the issues of sanitation and densification can keep job opportunities in the micro-economy in the city centre and improve living conditions for the long-settled residents in low and middle-income housing, without destroying social ties. Development strategies and urban redesigns for downtown Bahir Dar should therefore combine economic and commercial interests with provision for space for micro-enterprises of trade and production. Under the mixed-use land-zoning category, they should also allow for combined living and working. This way the current focus of the BDIDP on commercial development can shift to a more varied concept of high-density, inner-city use.

The rather consolidated area around the textile factory is currently somewhat exempt from population influx. Since rural-urban migration in various permanent and temporary forms is an issue of scale, the development of institutions for urban arrivals is an issue that all neighbourhoods will have to participate in. Under the conditions of urban growth, the seclusion of the textile area needs to be questioned regarding its receptiveness towards non-permanent residence and new arrivals. Phenomena such as multi-locality, temporary residency, and rural-urban

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migration have to be considered not as an interim phenomenon of transition but as a permanent set-up in the medium term. A pilot project regarding *arrival structures and temporary housing* (see Appelhans 2017: 213) is therefore suggested for the textile neighbourhood. It is suggested that established residential areas, such as the textile neighbourhood, can accommodate a share of the new and temporary urbanites. The pilot project should develop forms of housing for temporary or periodical residency and integrate these into neighbourhood life. Connected to this issue of non-permanent residency is also the question of consideration and representation of temporary residents in decision-making bodies. Urban arrival offices at the arrival points around bus stops, but also in the different neighbourhoods, could help disseminate vital information on accommodation, education and income opportunities, and offer assistance with administrative issues related to arrival and temporary residency.

Currently, traditional building practices are not part of Bahir Dar's modernisation agenda. Although incremental building is also common in large-scale projects, it is not explicitly recognised as a useful quality in urban development regulation. Local building material (clay and wood) has to be considered sustainable, yet, the small-scale housing structures that are traditionally constructed with the material are regarded as outdated by the multi-storey-oriented building regulations. It needs to be questioned whether the formal system thereby promotes an inclusive approach towards the low-income building practices, and whose interests are represented by the regulations. To amplify the access to housing under statutory planning, it is hence necessary to include simplified criteria for construction and incrementally upgrade existing neighbourhoods. The suggestion for areas such as the informal village is to declare them incremental-building zones (see Appelhans 2017: 215). Drafted on the model from Cape Town (City of Cape Town 2007, Appelhans 2014), these areas would not fall under the regular building standard, but would rather enter a period of legally protected step-by-step, in-situ upgrading. Thereby small-scale construction would generally be legal, with stipulations towards the area to eventually meet regular building standards over time.

In Bahir Dar's urbanisation process, challenges lie in uniting local traditions with furthering innovation. Here, the interaction of the university with the rest of the city holds potentials that are, currently, not being explored. The exchange of knowledge between the campus and the city can be much improved to work on questions of innovation. The university's moving away from sanctuary and engaging in the management of the cultural process of urbanisation by actively supporting the city's societal discourse and developing local tools for innovation would strongly benefit the town. The fourth proposal for a pilot project is therefore the implementation of *networks of innovation* (see Appelhans 2017: 218). The campus can thereby function as a hub from which other sites of the city are provided with know-how and integrated into an innovative development strategy. Under the aim of innovation, the discussion moves from visual ideas to questioning the underlying principles of urban development. The provision of serviced urban areas needs qualities beyond the provision of housing units, including new concepts for urban economies, spatial organisation, building technologies, and building design. Local start-ups are in need of

accompanying structures and advice. Access to information technology and devices needs to be substantially improved and holds potential for co-operation between university projects and private enterprise. Therein, not conformity to universal standards but, rather, free thought for local solutions needs to be an aim.

## Conclusion

Evidence from the four neighbourhoods in Bahir Dar shows that the contextual realities within which urbanisation takes place vary between the different sites of the city. It has to be assumed that looking at further neighbourhoods would even widen the spectrum of findings. However, the data points to a gap between local urbanisation practice and stipulations in urban policy, as everyday practices of various socio-cultural backgrounds have not found consideration in the Bahir Dar Integrated Development Plan. These everyday practices of urbanisation are not counter-strategies to state-led urban policies or simple "anti-positions" to the idea of a "developed" city. Instead, the reasons for the gap are indeed deeper and manifold. Most strikingly, for a large part of Bahir Dar's population even the low-cost housing programme is too difficult to access with the economic means that they have. Professional planning, hence, needs to ask itself the question of how to include practices of the majority into formal codes of urban development.

Responses to this question arise from the ideas inherent in the city's neighbourhoods. Citizens' understandings of improving the urban systems have mostly not been made explicit and are therefore not considered the status quo from which to inform policy and urban development. It is here that scientific data needs to be produced and professional planning in Ethiopia needs to move beyond technical assessments to embrace everyday practices as a reality of urbanisation. Urban policy thereby needs to shift from framing everyday urbanisation as a realm in which there is an "implementation problem" of planning, to embracing it. Instead of framing the patterns of diversity, arrival and incrementality, and knowledge production as a threat to "development", policy revision should draw on insights from everyday urbanisation practice to develop guiding principles for urban planning and new tools for the improvement of living conditions (Appelhans 2017: 209). However, statutory planning is necessary, as the research from the neighbourhoods also reveals that the areas cannot undergo self-regulation in questions of sanitation and citizen rights. A balanced approach can, therefore, expand the outcome of urban policy beyond the focus on formal housing provision, paired with practices of resettlement and compensation. Urban planning can, rather, include sophisticated concepts such as mixed-use zoning, arrival, incrementality, and innovation. Here, planners need to engage in process management and develop new toolboxes for the improvement of living conditions that address the contingencies of the location. For Bahir Dar, this requires abandoning assumptions on conformity, sedentariness, wage labour, and development standards as underlying principles of current planning approaches. Instead, it means recognising features of the existing neighbourhoods and everyday practices of urbanisation, such as diversity, mobility, incrementality and innovation, as fundamental to the urbanisation process – thereby placing everyday urbanisation at the heart of urban policy formulation.



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# "Getting it right from the start"? Building Spaces of Transnational Clothing Production in Ethiopia

Elke Beyer, Anke Hagemann

**"Die Chance, gleich richtig zu machen, was anderswo lange falsch gelaufen ist"?**

**Transnationale Räume der Bekleidungsproduktion in Äthiopien**

*Aktuell verfolgt die äthiopische Regierung eine ehrgeizige Entwicklungspolitik durch den Aufbau exportorientierter Leichtindustrie und landesweiter Infrastrukturnetze. Zunächst unterstützte sie ausländische Direktinvestitionen für einzelne Fabriken, um dann ein staatlich gelenktes Bauprogramm organisierter Industrieparks mit schlüsselfertigen Hallen aufzunehmen. Dieser Artikel untersucht einige der größten neueren Produktionsstandorte für Bekleidung in und um Addis Abeba, an denen für global agierende Marken gefertigt wird – darunter eine privat entwickelte, aus der Türkei verlagerte integrierte Strickwarenfabrik, und einen staatlichen Industriepark mit Nähfabriken süd- und ostasiatischer Zulieferer. Mit Blick auf ihre Einbindung in globale Güterketten und den jeweiligen städtisch-räumlichen und planerischen Kontext wird hinterfragt, wie sich transnationale Räume industrieller Produktion im Zusammenwirken internationaler, nationaler und lokaler Akteure konstituieren, und welche Potentiale, urbanen Effekte und Konflikte diese Entwicklungen beinhalten.*

Ethiopia's federal government is pursuing an ambitious economic development policy involving major transformation plans in order to become a middle-income country. An essential feature of this policy is the construction of large-scale industry parks for light manufacturing. Flanked by major infrastructure development in close cooperation with international partners, this amounts to a state-led development programme unique in scale and scope in Sub-Saharan Africa. In establishing industry parks, the government has strongly committed itself to encouraging global clothing brands and their suppliers to set up production facilities in the country – and some important industry players are already on board. The aims are to kick-start industrialisation, create large numbers of manufacturing jobs, generate revenue from export-oriented production, and put the country on the map of transnational production networks.

In this article, we trace the recent arrival in Ethiopia of clothing production for global markets by focusing on where, how, and by whom the industrial locations have been developed. Our research has been following a dynamic business network connecting production sites in Turkey, South-East Europe, and East Africa with Western European fashion companies and markets. Turkish clothing producers supplying global brands and retailers were among the pioneer foreign investors in Ethiopia after 2000, as the boom in clothing production in Turkey was losing momentum. Such transnational economic dynamics are intricately linked to urban development at all the sections of a commodity chain: they are articulated physically in the built environment – in the Ethiopian context, mostly by huge industrial developments on former agricultural land. They create particular sets of translocal relations and mutual dependencies at the industrial and distribution sites and the given urban context – for example, by

motivating numerous young women to migrate from the countryside and perform tasks of globalised "industrial culture". These dynamics also interact with planning governance from the national down to municipal levels, as multiscale constellations of actors driving urban development are formed. To build a better understanding how transnational production spaces are constituted, we propose to integrate urban research with global commodity chain and global production network approaches (Plank and Staritz 2009), on the one hand, and with transnationalism studies (Krätke, Wildner, and Lanz 2012), on the other.

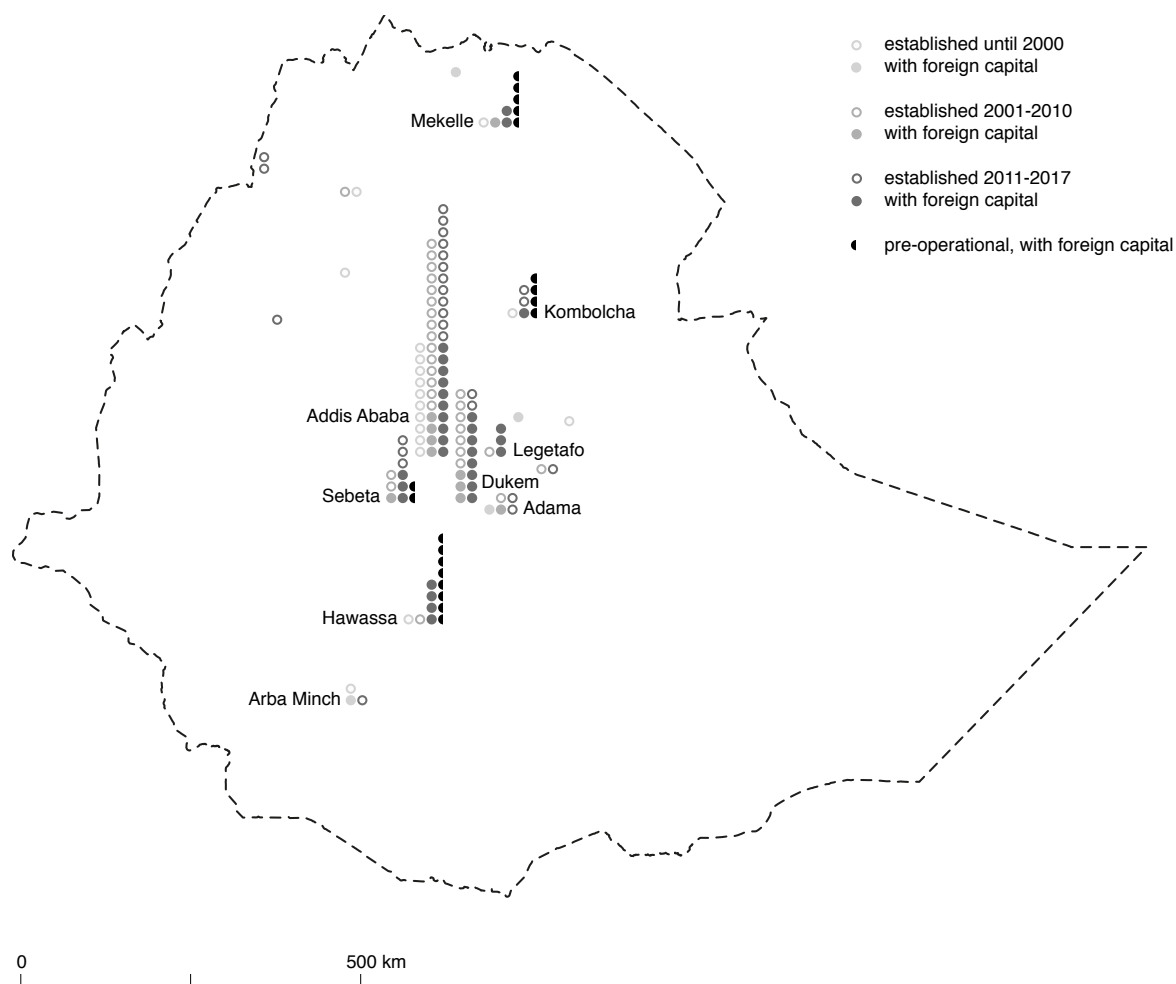
In the following, we review three roughly consecutive phases of the location policy and specific examples of its impact on urban space. In the initial stages of export production after 2000, singular large textile and garment factory complexes were built by individual foreign investors on greenfield sites, primarily in smaller towns around Addis Ababa. They were followed by the first government-led and private industry park projects in and around Addis Ababa, and then by a new generation of comprehensively planned industry parks, which are currently starting operations in several larger cities across the country. The article draws on recent site visits, plans and policy documents, as well more than 30 expert interviews conducted by the authors in September and October 2017 with factory managers and representatives of industry, government and planning institutions in the Addis Ababa region.

## **Foreign investment pioneers in Ethiopia after 2000**

Cotton growing and traditional spinning and weaving techniques have a long history in Ethiopia, but industrial textile and garment production has only rather recently been



**Figure 1:** Textile, garment and cotton processing factories in Ethiopia (2017). Map: Anke Hagemann, Elke Beyer, Rucha Kelkar; Sources: ETIDI 2017, Mihretu and Lobet 2017, own research



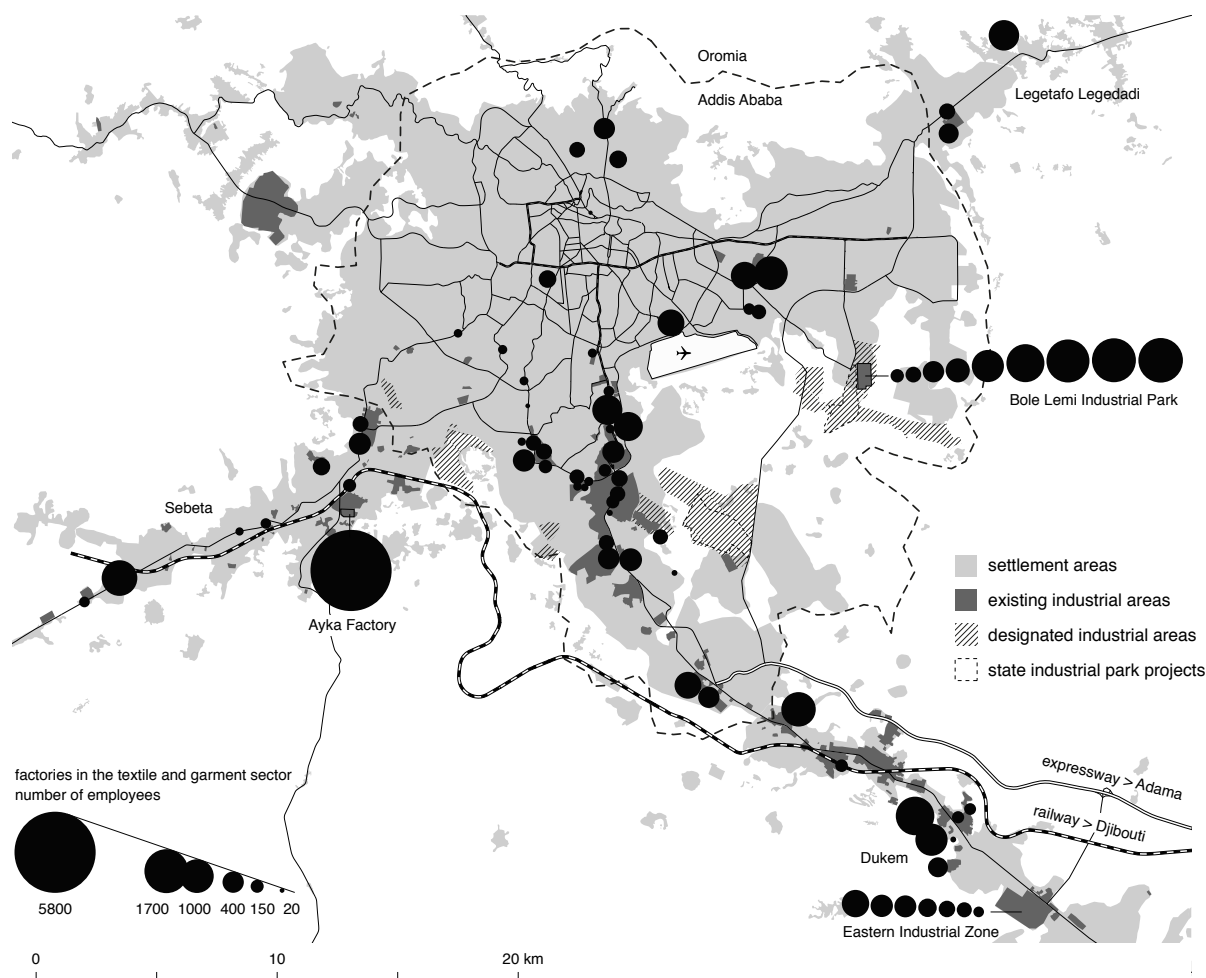
acquiring significant scale. Today, the textiles and garment manufacturing sector is an important source of employment in Ethiopia. But manufacturing is still dwarfed by agriculture, the predominant source of income for more than three-quarters of the nation's 100-million-plus, fast-growing population. Statistics on the textile and garment sector vary from about 20,000 to 50,000 employees, with sharp rises expected as new industry parks start operations (Central Statistics Agency 2014, AACCSA and DAB DRT 2017, Endeshaw 2016b).

Up to the mid-1990s, the Ethiopian textile industry consisted of about a dozen large, integrated factories with several hundreds or thousands of workers each, operating in bigger towns across the country and often owned and run by the state. They were complemented by a few medium-size, private garment factories in Addis Ababa catering primarily to the domestic market. After 2000, the Ethiopian textile and garment industry gradually began to expand. Exports to global markets, especially to Europe and the US, increased significantly after preferential trade frameworks like the US Africa Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA, since 2000) and the EU Everything but Arms Initiative (EBA, since 2001) permitted duty-free clothing export from Ethiopia (USITC 2009). Within a decade, the number of companies in the sector roughly tripled. A number of small to medium-size clothing factories were started by local investors. Some of the large state-owned factories were privatised. At the same time, foreign investors began to build textile factories, with Pakistani, Japanese and Chinese investors among the pioneers. Most of the companies founded since 2000 have chosen locations in Addis

Ababa or nearby towns in Oromia Regional State (ETIDI 2017). [Figure 1 and 2]

Some of the largest factory complexes designated for export production were established by Turkish entrepreneurs between 2005 and 2011, facilitated by close contacts between top-level Ethiopian and Turkish government personalities. At least twenty Turkish investment projects for large to medium-size textile and garment factories in Ethiopia were reported between 2003 and 2011, in addition to scores of projects in the construction sector. (Ministry of Economy n. y.) Less than half came to fruition. The outstanding example is clearly Ayka Addis, a huge integrated textile and garment factory launched in Sebeta, an Oromia municipality bordering Addis, in 2007. Just a few kilometres to the west, another large Turkish-owned textile factory employing up to 1300 people was established, initially as a joint-venture with the Ethiopian government. (Endeshaw 2016a) Three more integrated textile factories, with some 700 to 1000 workers each, were founded by Turkish entrepreneurs and started operations in 2010/2011: two in the city of Adama, about 85 km south-east of Addis, and one in Legetafo Legedadi, some 20 km to the north-east of the capital.

The motivations for Turkish textile entrepreneurs to set up production facilities in Ethiopia were economic pressure, as the Turkish textile industry was facing difficulties after many boom years, and the generous incentives and opportunities provided by the Ethiopian government. In Turkey, production costs (including wages and energy) had been rising while global buyers had no intentions to



**Figure 2:** Industrial areas and factories in the textile and garment sector in Addis Ababa and neighbouring towns (2017). Map: Anke Hagemann, Elke Beyer, Rucha Kelkar; Sources: Google Maps, OpenStreetMap, <africaopen-data.org>, ETIDI 2017, IPDC (2015), AACAMPPO

loosen their "mortal" pricing expectations. In the mid-2000s, as the unfavourable currency exchange rates of the Turkish lira contributed to reduced profits, numerous Turkish clothing producers sought to relocate or expand operations to regions with lower costs and wages for labour-intensive production (Şahin 2006). Many of the businesses had evolved from simple suppliers to "full-package" producers in charge of most aspects of the production chain, with the necessary know-how to build branch plants or fully integrated factories. Ethiopia appealed with the promise of abundant labour without minimum wages, very low costs for land, electricity and water supply, generous credit lines and tax breaks for foreign investors and their expat staff, and a stable government willing to pave the way for foreign investors – as in the case of Ayka Addis, which can be seen as a early flagship project in many respects.

### For example: Ayka Addis

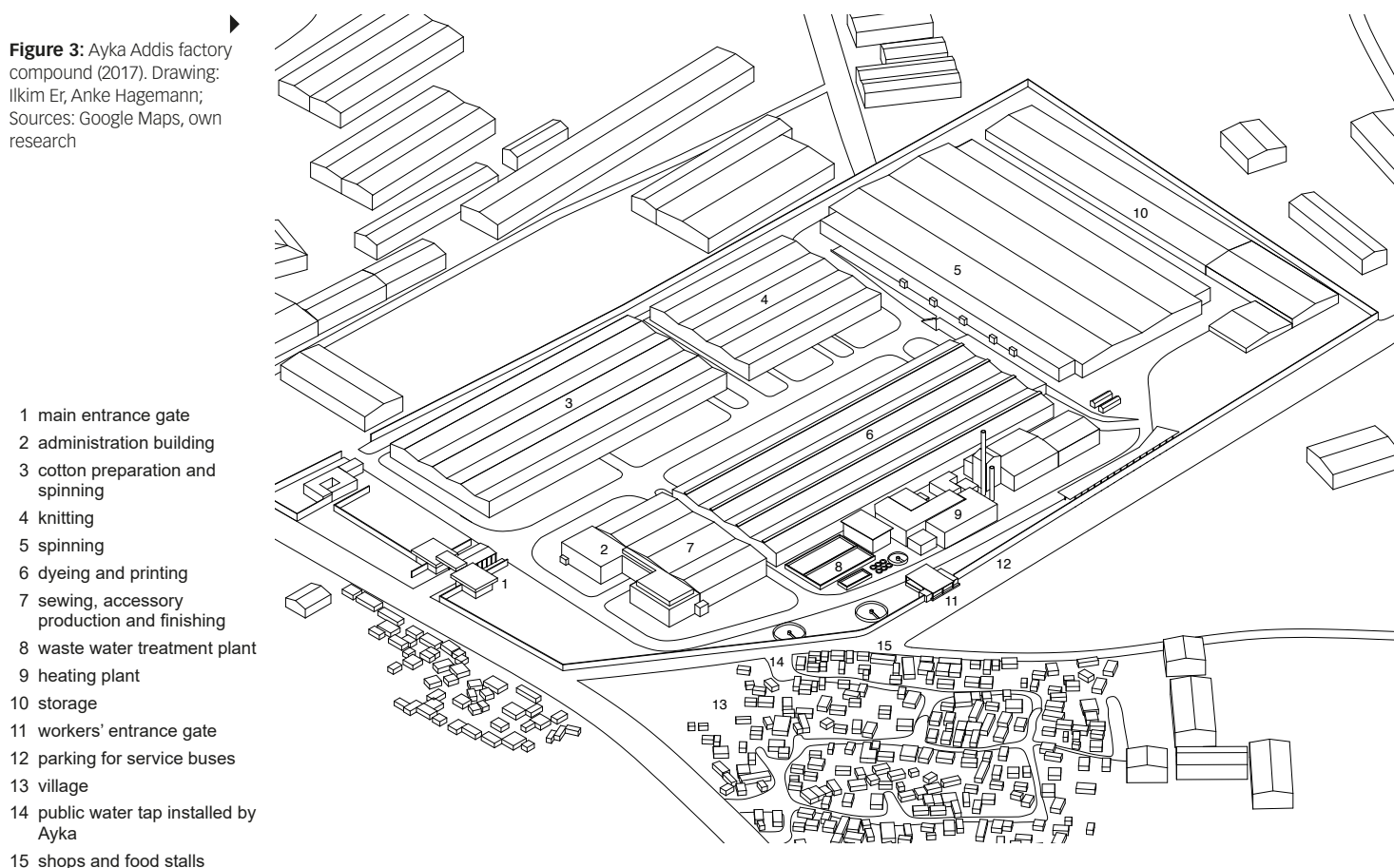
Ayka Addis was founded as a subsidiary of a Turkish-based knitwear producer in 2006. Mediated by Ethiopian federal authorities, Ayka's owners acquired a 140,000 m<sup>2</sup> plot of land in the Alem Gena sub-district of the *woreda* Sebeta – just outside the capital's administrative boundary in Oromia Regional State, and close to the planned last stop of the new railway line to Djibouti. Previously, the land was held by local farmers, who received compensation based on an estimated ten years' worth of harvested crops. (By constitution, all land in Ethiopia belongs to the government and individuals acquire leases, usually for 99 years, which are terminable at the government's

discretion.) The industry giant was not unequivocally welcome: a company representative recalled being received during the first site visit by locals throwing stones (authors' interview with Ayka representatives). Because of the volume of the investment, promising several thousands of jobs, the location process as well as the economic success of Ayka Addis was and is a matter of federal government importance. Sixty percent of the total investment cost was provided through credits from Ethiopian banks, forty percent by Ayka. The company planned and built its entire plant autonomously. It hired Turkish construction engineers, consulted an Addis-based planning office to adapt the designs to local standards, and set up its own building branch to erect the factory buildings. Gradually, machinery and most production capacities were relocated from Turkey to Ethiopia, with only an office and one production unit remaining in Istanbul. The Addis factory became fully operational in 2010. [Figure 3 and 4]

The well-kept, landscaped compound sits walled-in between smaller industrial facilities, fields, and green hills in a water-rich area. Along a central access road from the main gate, one office block and five spacious factory halls are arranged in a U-shaped plan. The halls for the different production steps are discerned by brightly coloured roofs, and include kitchens and canteens for employees. The compound has its own well, heating plant, and a wastewater treatment facility.

By September 2017, about 5800 workers were manufacturing yarn, knit fabrics, and garments like T-shirts, night-wear or baby clothes – exclusively designated for export

**Figure 3:** Ayka Addis factory compound (2017). Drawing: Ilkim Er, Anke Hagemann; Sources: Google Maps, own research



and partly made of organic cotton sourced from outside Ethiopia. The whole production process – including spinning, knitting, dyeing and treatment, cutting, sewing, and finishing – takes place under Ayka's roof. Garments leave the factory wrapped in plastic and ready for sale, with price labels already attached. When a container is ready to be trucked to Djibouti port, custom officers seal it inside the Sebeta factory compound. Delivery to European customers takes about one month. Since 2000 and throughout the relocation process, Ayka's main customer has been Germany's Tchibo. But Turkish brands, and international brands like H&M, have recently also started placing orders.

**Figure 4:** Ayka factory compound in Sebeta, October 2017. Photo: Anke Hagemann



Judging from its physical appearance, the Ayka Addis plant provides a relatively high-standard working environment, which is regularly subject to inspection by its demanding international customers. In compliance with the social standards of its main customer, there is a trade union in the factory, allowing formal collective bargaining and frequent training activities – rather exceptional in Ethiopia, where the level of unionisation is very low. The current entry-level wage at Ayka quoted by the management when asked in September 2017 was 1100 birr per month (or 39 euro at the time). Workers are provided with one free warm meal per shift. Company buses service a commuting radius of up to 50 km – to reach the factory by public means would be a challenge. [Figure 5 and 6]

The factory compound borders on a modest village. A little "service strip" with shops and food stalls stretches out perpendicular to the back exit road where workers leave after the shift. Ayka's compound is surrounded by many fenced-in businesses, like furniture factories or PET bottle recycling plants, strung along the rather worn-out asphalt road crossing the new Djibouti railway and leading to the busy main road to Addis. Most of these industrial facilities were built in the past decade and very few employ more than 100 people, according to data provided by Sebeta Municipality. The area is designated as a coherent industrial area in the current municipal land-use plan, but the way it was built up indicates little formal urban planning. Located in convenient proximity to the western gate of the capital, in recent times much of the Alem Gena sub-district has been built up with factories, as well as office, service and residential buildings (including some gated communities), interspersed with all sorts of trading businesses along the main asphalt road. Cobblestone roads branch off into low-rise residential and mixed-use neighbourhoods.



Ayka Addis is something of a model project, showcased in the annual *Sustainability Report* of its main customer Tchibo as an example of mass production with a good conscience (Tchibo 2017). However, not everything seemed to be going so smoothly in 2017 – the factory was visibly operating below capacity, power cuts were common, and there was talk of delays of in-coming supplies as well as of the need to extend the Ethiopian bank credits (Endeshaw 2016a). Other foreign textile industry investment projects of the same period were more ill-fated: after acquiring big plots of former agricultural land, some investors failed even to start building factories, causing much discontent within local communities (Dadi et al. 2016; Endeshaw 2015). Others – such as Turkish-owned Saygin Dima or ELSE in Adama – were foreclosed after a few years, leaving huge and apparently unprofitable production facilities in the ownership of Ethiopian banks (Endeshaw 2016b, Fikade 2016, authors' interview with a SEDA representative).

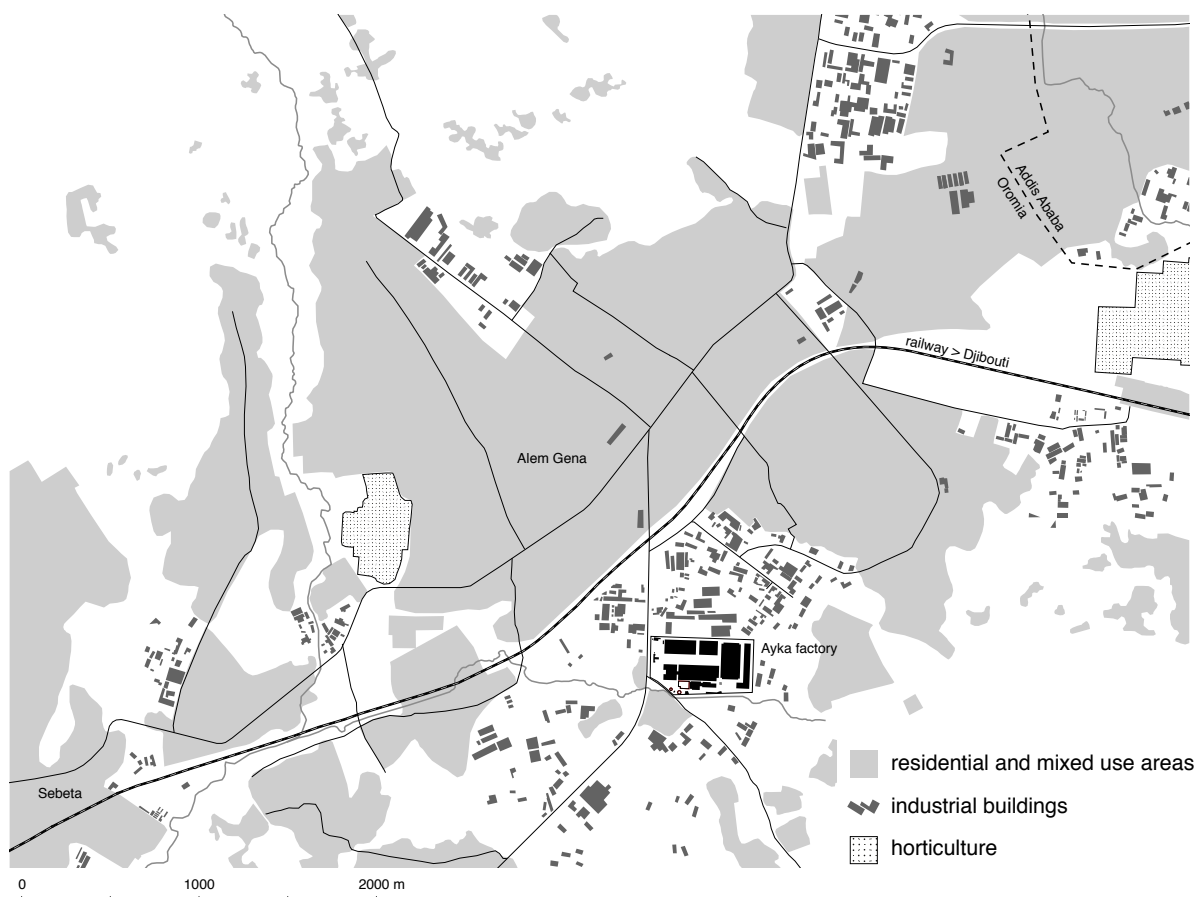
Even if they are close to the capital and its infrastructures, these singularly developed industrial facilities for export production face multiple challenges. In physical terms, this concerns infrastructures for transport, power supply, water and wastewater, not to speak of housing for workers at convenient distances. In terms of logistics, having to rely on far-distant suppliers for raw materials, accessories, and all kinds of spare parts and services can be a daunting challenge, as several company representatives reported to the authors. Further complications include financial challenges like hard-currency shortages and, sometimes, challenges of bureaucratic nature. Many valid obstacles to meet expectations in export production are mentioned: rising costs of production, transport and supplies, quality problems regarding local materials, or low productivity.



**Figure 5:** Shops and food stores outside the Ayka compound, October 2017. Photo: Anke Hagemann

But some also suspect “a lack of commitment from the side of textile investors [...] who would like to take short-cuts and access the easy local market” (Assefa 2015), where goods can reportedly be sold at higher prices than international buyers will pay (Abdu 2017).

In view of all these challenges encountered by the pioneering export producers, a different location and industrial planning policy was gradually adopted and refined by the Ethiopian government to ease the path for foreign direct-investment projects: their concentration in organised industrial parks, as is discussed in the following section.

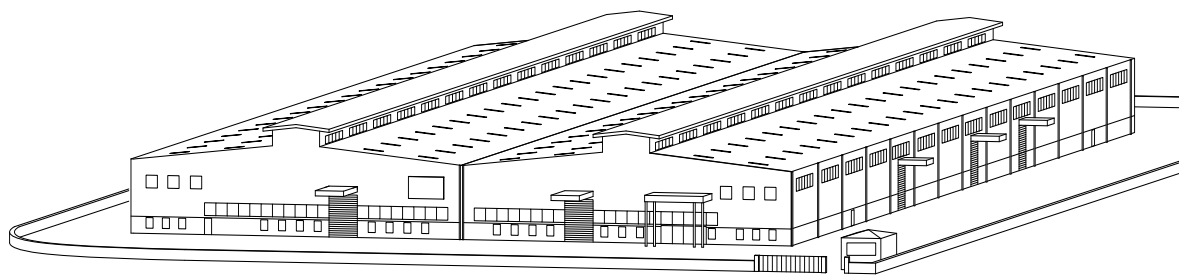


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**Figure 6:** Ayka Addis factory and its surroundings (2017). Map: Anke Hagemann, Elke Beyer, Rucha Kelkar; Sources: Google Maps, OpenStreet-Map, AACAMPPPO

**Figure 7:** Double-shed type for lease to clothing producers in Bole Lemi 1 industrial park (2017). Drawing: Ilkim Er; Sources: own research



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Last but not least, however, a major issue at stake was and is community relations. The current state of community relations can be seen as an outcome of how much or little thought was given to integrating new industrial facilities into the existing peri-urban or rural context, i.e., comprehensive and community-oriented urban planning, and how much or little was invested to ensure that local stakeholders stood to gain as much from large-scale industrial development as the central government pursuing countrywide development goals. This leads to the question of participation in decision-making and revenue distribution as an issue of national and local governance. It also leads to the question of corporate social responsibility – beyond mere gestures like the one modest, public water tap installed by Ayka outside the compound to share some of its abundant well-water with residents of the immediate neighbourhood. Even though Sebeta Municipality representatives highlighted, in conversations with the authors, how the town benefits from Ayka, especially from the jobs and related income tax revenues, the company is liable to pay part of its taxes directly to the federal authorities due to its high turnover. However, the atmosphere seems tense. At the time of our visit, armed soldiers were guarding the Ayka grounds, something done ever since a crowd of angry protesters had gathered outside the factory in 2016, while other companies on Oromia territory with foreign or federal government ties

had been attacked and set on fire (Seyoum 2016). These violent protests were directed against the – now abandoned – integrated master plan for the capital and surrounding Oromia Special Zone, fuelled by fears of Oromia being overreached in Ethiopia's quest for industrialisation and foreign investment.

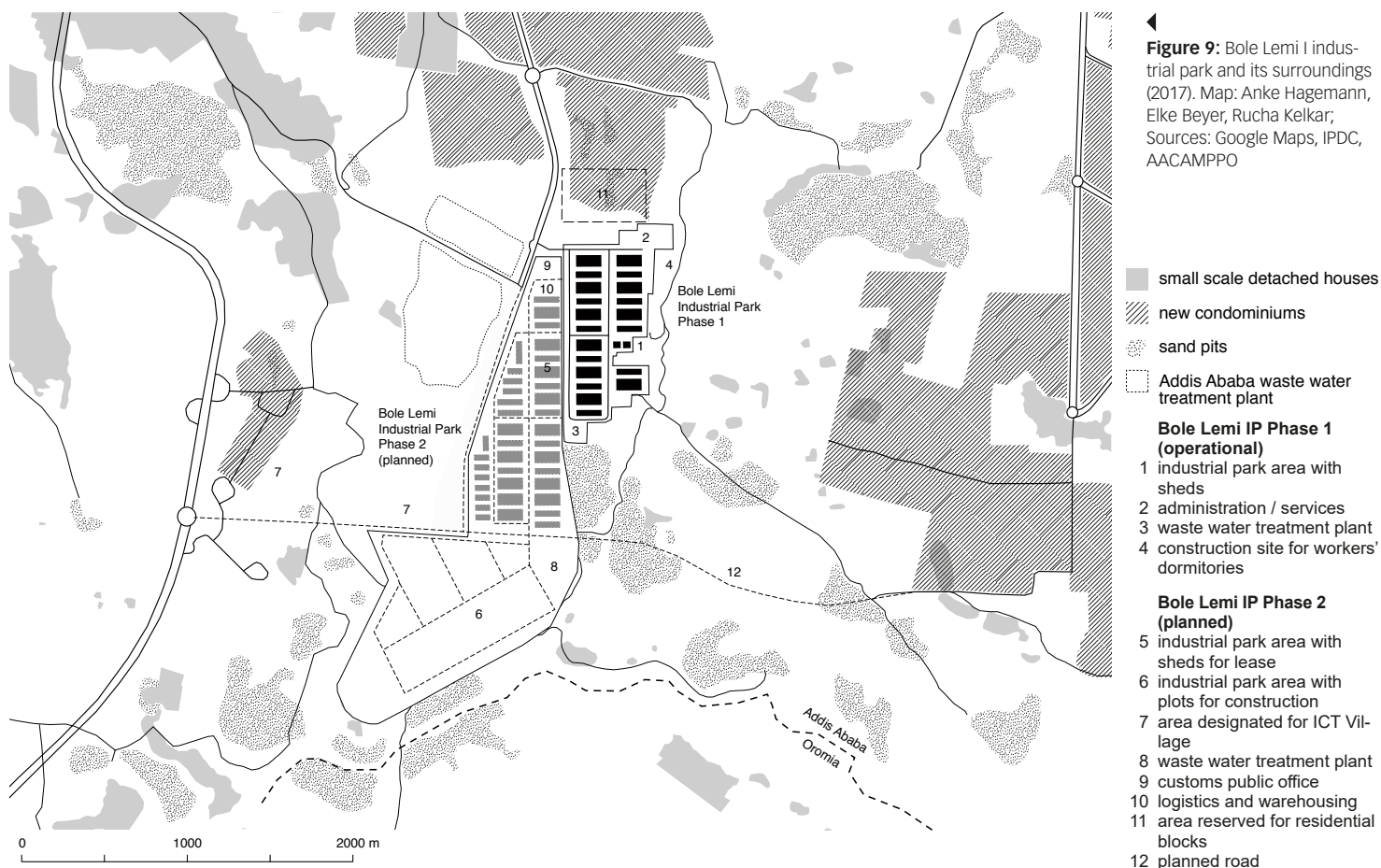
#### Early industrial parks

When industrial development was beginning to sprout in the periphery of Addis Ababa in the decade after 2000, first initiatives were taken to concentrate industry locations. Industrial sprawl is especially apparent on the south-eastern fringe of the capital and along the main transport corridor to Djibouti, extending outwards from the airport parallel to the Addis-Adama Expressway and the new railway line, via the small towns Gelan, Dukem, and Debrezeyit (Bishoftu). In this quickly developing area, two quite diverse pioneer industry parks were launched after 2005. One is located in Dukem Municipality in Oromia Regional State: the Eastern Industrial Zone, which has a mixed portfolio of industries, was privately developed with support by the Ethiopian and Chinese governments, and is 100% owned by Chinese investors (Ziso 2017, Giannecchini and Taylor 2018). The second one is Bole Lemi Industry Park, a government project located within the administrative boundaries of Addis Ababa.



**Figure 8:** Garment production in Bole Lemi I industrial park, October 2017. Photo: Anke Hagemann





### For example: Bole Lemi I

At Bole Lemi I, the Ethiopian federal government took the development of a comprehensively planned industry park for export garment production in its own hands for the first time. On a 156-hectare plot of former agricultural land at a 5-km linear distance east of Addis Ababa Airport, authorities commissioned a consortium of Ethiopian construction firms to build 20 turn-key sheds of two types – 5000 and 11000 sqm, respectively – serviced by roads, water mains, a collective wastewater treatment plant, a power sub-station, and a “one-stop shop” for all administrative affairs including customs, visa, taxes, etc. The sheds were leased ready for “plug-and-play”, aiming at a very quick production start once an investment decision was made. Investors only needed to customise the sheds with drywall partitioning and move in the machinery. However, the planning and building process of Bole Lemi I turned out to be somewhat lengthy, and both Ethiopian government representatives and tenants admitted room for improvement regarding the construction quality of the sheds. But the rental and energy costs are very competitive in global comparison, and attractive incentive packages are offered to foreign investors for setting up export production facilities in Ethiopia's industry parks (EIC 2017). [Figure 7 and 8]

At the time of writing, Bole Lemi I is fully occupied. Eleven companies have leased the sheds and started operations since 2013/14. Most are garment producers, mainly branch plants of Southeast Asian suppliers to big global brands like H&M or European retailers. The majority make simple product types like basic T-shirts or babywear in large order quantities. In total, the clothing factories in

Bole Lemi I employ more than 10,000 workers (ETIDI 2017), a number which could double or triple if the companies were to expand production to two or three shifts. For the time being, almost all supplies are imported from overseas and shipped to Bole Lemi I by truck from Djibouti, and all finished goods leave the park in sealed containers in the same way.

The location of Bole Lemi I still seemed somewhat isolated at the time of our visit, but it is accessible via major new roads. Likewise, the surrounding eastern fringe areas of Addis are also undergoing residential and commercial development of remarkable scale and speed. But the new residences are only affordable to the better-off, while the issues of housing and transport for the 10,000 employees at Bole Lemi I were not satisfactorily addressed in the park's planning. At present, companies are bringing in their employees by bus from their places of residence across the capital – a strain on workers' time budgets as well as on companies' finances. As a remedy, some factories have begun to construct their own dormitories in immediate proximity to their sheds, on land they have been given right outside the park's boundaries for this purpose. As is well documented from similar arrangements in Southeast Asia, factory-owned dormitory housing can result in alienating, sometimes very poor living conditions, and increases workers' dependency on employers – therefore, it is a practice some workers' rights organisations and also major buyers would like to categorically exclude from fair production arrangements. [Figure 9]

Adjacent to Bole Lemi I, earthwork has begun for an expansion of the industry park. The second phase, Bole Lemi II, is designed to encompass about 180 hectares with two

### References (cont.)

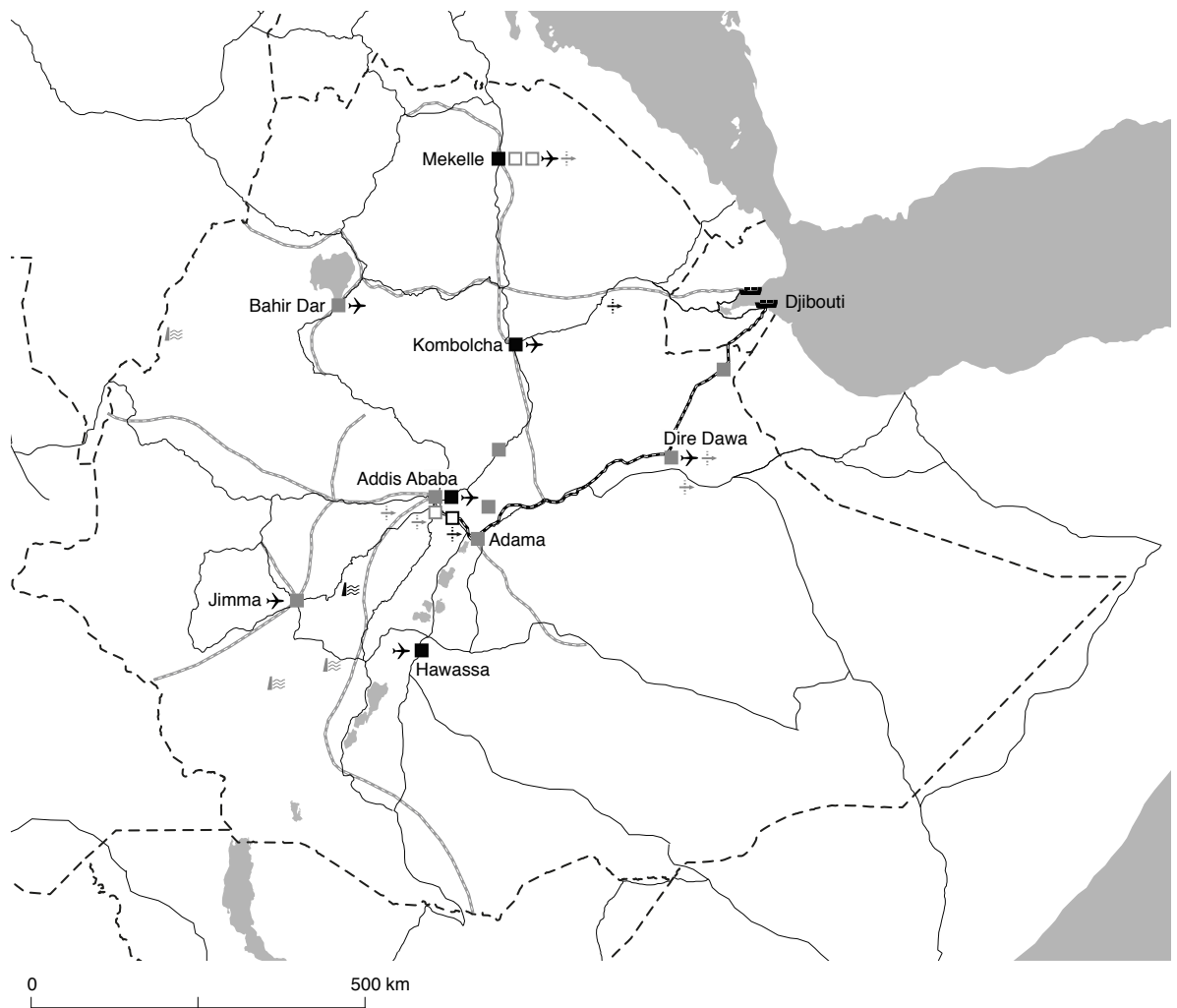
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**Figure 10:** Industrial park and infrastructure development in Ethiopia (2017). Map: Anke Hagemann, Elke Beyer, Rucha Kelkar; Sources: Google Maps, OpenStreet-Map, <www.maplibrary.org>, EIC, IPDC, Embassy of Ethiopia (Brussels), Ethiopian Shipping Lines

- state industrial park (operational / under construction or planned)
- private industrial park (operational / under construction or planned)
- ✈ airport
- ✈ dryport (operational / under construction or planned)
- 🚢 container port
- railway (completed / under construction or planned)
- ⚡ hydropower plant (operational / under construction)

Many thanks to Rucha Hemant Kelkar for her assistance in research, fieldwork and mapping, and to Ilkim Er for preparing drawings.



sections. On a strip of land extending in parallel to Bole Lemi I, leasable ready-made sheds similar to those of the first phase are planned – also designated primarily for garment making without specialised large-scale equipment. The other section offers plots for construction to investors who would like to have more influence on the design and layout of the buildings, for textile or accessory production lines with more specific spatial requirements. The expansion project also envisages an area for residential construction, partly for expat management and technical staff, but also for workers' housing, presumably dormitories. In addition, green spaces and commercial and entertainment facilities are planned (IPDC 2017).

### Current industrial parks – an outlook

Bole Lemi I and the Eastern Industry Zone are seen as pioneer projects – with many plus points, but also some shortcomings that the next generation of industrial parks (IP), which are currently being set up in an ambitious programme by the Ethiopian federal government under the lead of the Industrial Park Development Corporation (IPDC), are seeking to evade. This public enterprise was set up for this purpose in 2014 under the Ministry of Industry, working in close cooperation with the Ethiopian Investment Commission (EIC). Eleven new organised industry parks are currently being built or in planning by this authority. Eight of them specifically address textile and garment producers, sometimes combined with food processing and other types of light manufacturing (IPDC 2015). The flagship "Hawassa Eco-Industrial Park", as well as the

Kombolcha and Mekelle IPs, started operations in 2016/17; Adama and Dire Dawa IPs were announced to be inaugurated in December 2017. In addition, several significant private industry parks are under construction in Addis and Mekelle. [Figure 10]

One important issue addressed by the current government programme is the trend towards industry concentration and sprawl in and around the capital. By means of regionally differentiated incentives, also available to private developers, and by physically constructing industry parks, the federal government seeks to direct industrial development more evenly to the diverse cities and regions of the country. The EIC is now discouraging any FDI-led industrial development outside organised parks. These policies come in conjunction with Ethiopia's highly ambitious infrastructure construction programme for creating a national rail and road network and ample power supply (mainly from hydropower). Assistance here comes primarily from China, as a major partner and role model for state-led development (Delz 2016, UNDP and IPRCC 2015, Ziso 2017), but also Turkey and other development partners. The Ethiopian government's insistence to locate new production sites at a distance from Addis may come with one welcome side-effect to companies depending on a particular "industrial culture" of rigid discipline and productivity. In and around Addis, sewing-factory managers reported to the authors a high mobility of workers eager to move on to better-paying and more-satisfying jobs in trade, services, or more-attractive sectors of manufacturing (see also Blattman and Dercon 2017). Smaller regional centres,



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however, may offer fewer chances to move on quickly, thus binding workers more tightly to the factories in the new industrial parks.

Another issue is the optimisation of the process of developing and building industrial parks. For Hawassa IP and other new manufacturing locations, among them Bole Lemi Phase II, the Ethiopian federal government cooperated with world-renowned consultants (like McKinsey and Arup), development agencies, and international institutions. For Bole Lemi II and Kilinto (another industry park project in Addis Ababa), the World Bank is providing financial support and, accordingly, feasibility studies as well as environmental and social assessment reports are requested to prove the observance of the standards of the institution (IPDC 2017). For the construction of the new parks, mostly experienced Chinese state construction companies were commissioned. Some parks were ready to start operations after less than a year's construction time.

In parallel, the Ethiopian federal government closely cooperated with powerful global buyers able to create a real stir in the industry and the media. At some new parks, thanks to this, foreign investors arrived in clusters. In Hawassa IP, the global buyer Phillips-Van Heusen (PVH), holder of well-known brands like Tommy Hilfiger, made a commitment as an anchor tenant (Mihretu and Llobet 2017). A score of this buyer's suppliers are currently setting up operations in Hawassa. Also, H&M made a much-publicised move to Ethiopia – the company set up a sourcing office in Addis Ababa and, beyond sourcing from existing Ethiopian and foreign-owned factories, the giant retailer is setting up production facilities in a privately developed industry park and a training centre in Mekelle in collaboration with its major Bangladeshi supplier DBL, the Swedfund development agency, and the German Ministry for Economic Cooperation (BMZ) (Swedfund 2016, BMZ 2017). Such news seems to be creating traction in the industry, as could be witnessed at the busy 2017 Africa Sourcing and Fashion Week trade fair in Addis Ababa. In the medium term, it is hoped that companies will form local production networks, resulting in a multiplication of suppliers in Ethiopia. Once the full supply chain is present in the country, it will no longer be necessary to either set up complete vertically integrated production facilities – like Ayka Addis and its fellow pioneers – or to import all supplies at high costs and with logistic worries.

For the industry (and the government), the new generation of large-scale industrial parks offers several advantages: infrastructure investments can be concentrated, production conditions can be controlled more easily, and standards – e.g., in terms of building safety or wastewater treatment – can be enforced even before starting operations. At a time of rising customer awareness and demands to meet environmental and workplace standards, the question of being in full control of production environments – beyond mere quality control – is crucial to the garment industry. In the confined industrial parks, all inputs and outputs can be monitored with greater ease than in scattered, autonomous production facilities (as are typical of the clothing production networks in established supplier countries such as Turkey or Bangladesh). The recruitment of workers is centralised to some extent, as applicants are screened in government-run recruitment

centres across the country and then recommended to companies. The companies in Hawassa IP even agreed on a common entry-level wage of 650 birr per month (23 euros as of October 2017).

**In conclusion**, the development strategy of locating transnational clothing production in Ethiopia's new industrial parks has quite ambivalent aspects. It is a formidable endeavour, and the relatively high standards of the production facilities and the parks as a whole ensure workplace safety and avoid certain types of environmental hazards. However, the price for this seems to neither gravely affect the buyers' balances nor be printed on the tags of the cheap, mass-produced clothes sold in ever-greater quantities around the globe. The move of the global clothing industry to Ethiopia is sustained not only by a strong "developmental state" committed to offering favourable conditions for development "at all cost" (Delz 2015) – e.g., by offering land and water resources, including those used for generating "renewable" hydropower by gigantic dams, at very low cost. But it is also borne by tens of thousands of workers ready to "industrialise" at wages clearly below the World Bank's extreme poverty line of 1,90 USD per day. Thus, Ethiopia is "not like Bangladesh" in a double sense: transnational production in Ethiopia takes place under much more strictly monitored conditions, but at the same time at significantly lower wages.

The crucial question for Ethiopia's future industrialisation path is whether significant and durable backward and forward linkages can be formed between the transnational production facilities and the domestic economy, or whether the industry parks are bound to remain foreign-dependent enclaves of extremely low-wage production for volatile global clothing markets. With regards to manufacturing operations set up by private Chinese investors in Ethiopia, a recent assessment concludes that stimuli to domestic economic developments and skills transfer "so far remain limited" – as opposed to Chinese investment in Ethiopian infrastructures, which is perceived as "more instrumental in transforming the country" (Nicolas 2017: 4). Likewise, scholars put a question mark behind an appraisal of the Eastern Industry Zone as a "catalyst for development" (Giannecchini and Taylor 2018). Whether a different picture will emerge for transnational clothing production at the Hawassa or Mekelle industry parks – proclaimed as a way of "getting it right from the start" in *unisono* by industry representatives and development partners (PVH 2017, BMZ 2017) – remains an open question.

But from an urban planning and community perspective, the creation of huge monofunctional industry enclaves in peripheral locations certainly engenders multiple problems, problems which seem not to be addressed sufficiently to-date in spite of the efforts of the authorities and consultants. This is especially applicable to the needed accommodations and transport for the tens of thousands of workers, many of whom are new arrivals to the cities from the countryside. Are all these inevitable hardships and compromises on the difficult path to becoming a middle-income country? Or does Ethiopia run the risk of perpetuating uneven, exploitative socio-economic relations by physically embedding them in infrastructures like the transnational production spaces of the new industrial parks? And what could be possible, if any, alternatives?

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# Ethiopia Is Growing Green Again

Johannes Schoeneberger

## Äthiopien wird wieder Grün: ein erfolgreiches Programm zum Boden- und Wasserschutz

*Im von Subsistenzlandwirtschaft geprägten, dicht besiedelten Hochland Äthiopiens führt das hohe Bevölkerungswachstum zu einem starken Druck auf landwirtschaftliche Böden. Überweidung, Abholzung und unangemessene Anbaumethoden führten vielerorts zum Verlust von Anbauflächen durch wind- und wasserbedingte Erosion. Dies ist einer der wichtigsten Gründe für die niedrige landwirtschaftliche Produktivität, was besonders ins Gewicht fällt, da die Landwirtschaft nach wie vor der wichtigste Wirtschaftszweig des Landes ist. Die Regierung hat das Problem erkannt und seit 2008 führt das Landwirtschaftsministerium in 200 Hochlanddistrikten ein vom BMZ, von Norwegen, Kanada, der Weltbank und der EU unterstütztes Programm (Sustainable Land Management Programm) zum nachhaltigen Landmanagement durch. Aufbauend auf Erfahrungen früherer Entwicklungsprojekte setzt es auf relativ einfache aber wirksame Methoden, die die Bauern und Bäuerinnen unter Anleitung selbst durchführen können. Der erste Schritt ist eine durch lokale Berater\*innen gemeinsam mit der Dorfbevölkerung vorgenommene Problemanalyse. Als zweiter Schritt werden Maßnahmen festgelegt, etwa der Bau von Terrassen. Teils decken internationale Entwicklungspartner die Kosten, die äthiopische Regierung trägt jedoch den hohen Personalkostenetat für die (meist von der GIZ ausgebildeten) lokalen Berater\*innen in den Dörfern. Die große Akzeptanz bei der Landbevölkerung zeigt den Erfolg und die Qualität dieser Beratungen. Die Unterstützung dauert fünf bis sieben Jahre. In der dritten Phase, einer 'ökonomischen Entwicklungsphase', geht es um eine bessere Bodennutzung durch verbessertes Saatgut, Felderrotation, oder die Einführung von Obst- und Gemüseanbau für die lokalen Märkte. Der größte Effekt wird durch neue Bewässerungsmethoden erreicht. Durch Versickerung des Regenwassers auf den Terrassen werden in der kurzen, starken Regenzeit natürliche unterirdische Reservoirs gefüllt, die hangabwärts Brunnen speisen und eine zweite Ernte ermöglichen. Solche wirksamen Innovationen werden inzwischen oft von anderen Dörfern kopiert.*

## A successful programme to conserve soil and water

Ethiopia, with more than 100 million inhabitants in 2016 (UNDESA 2014), is the second populous country in Africa after Nigeria. Agriculture is by far the nation's most important economic branch: 80% of the population works in agriculture, which contributes 47%, the largest part, to the gross domestic product

and nearly 80% to the country's export. The majority of the farmers live in the densely settled rural highland regions as subsistence farmers practising rainfall agriculture. This form of subsistence farming is being negatively affected due to increasingly irregular rainfall, and dry periods.

Because of the high annual population growth of 2.7% the pressure on agricultural land in the highlands is very heavy. In the 1980s, Ethiopia had a population of only 40 million. In 2013, an Ethiopian peasant family worked on average on one ha of land. A combination of overgrazing by cattle, deforestation of slopes, and inappropriate agricultural methods have led to high degradation of soil through erosion by water and wind in large parts of the country. [Figure 1]

An estimated 27 million ha of land, approximately half of the highlands, are affected by erosion. Across the country, the enormous amount of 1.5 billion tonnes of soil is washed away each year: that matches the length of a freight train as long as three times around the equator. Land degradation is one of the major reasons for low agricultural productivity in Ethiopia. It accounts for a yearly loss of 2-3% of the agricultural gross domestic product and contributes directly to the poverty of the country. In some regions, sufficient food for the population is already no longer secured; in other regions, a similar situation is looming. [Figures 2 - 4]

**Figure 1:** Cultivation of hillsides without terraces with oxen. Photo: J. Schoeneberger







◀ **Figure 2 and 3:** Soil loss through water erosion and gully formation. Photo: J. Schoeneberger

### Promotion of sustainable land cultivation

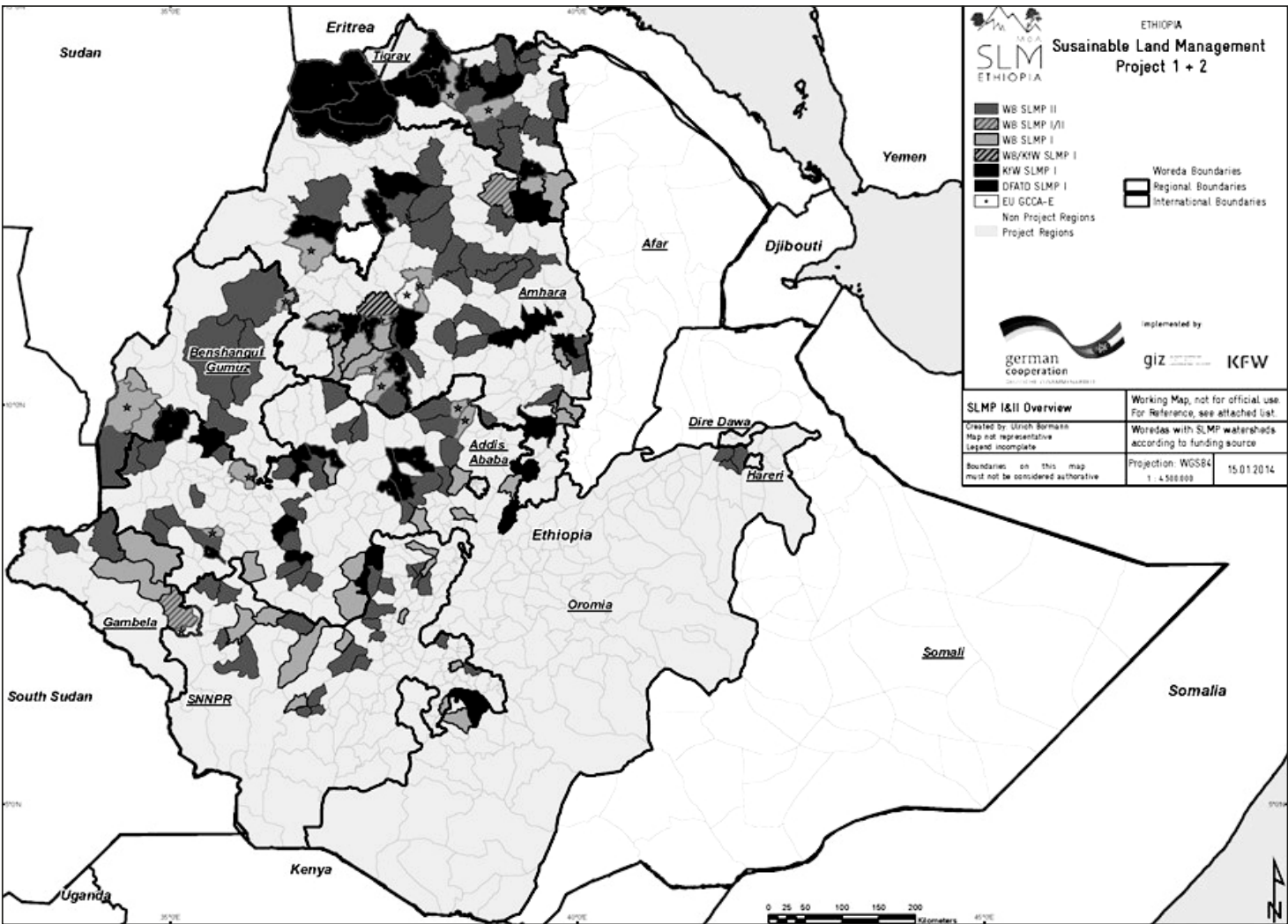
In recognition of this problem, the Ethiopian government started a countrywide programme for soil and water conservation in 2008, the Sustainable Land Management Programme (SLMP), based on the experience of earlier

projects of various supporters (Germany, FAO and others). In more than 200 highland districts, the programme has been implemented by the national agricultural ministry and its decentralised institutions, supported with advice and funding from the German, Norwegian and Canadian Government, from EU, and the World Bank. [Figure 5]

**Figure 4:** Without intervention, the increased width of gullies destroys large parts of agriculturally used land. Photo: J. Schoeneberger



**Figure 5:** Map of Sustainable Land Management Project (SLMP) sites, 177 districts in 6 regions. Source: Ministry of Agriculture and Natural Resources







◀ **Figure 6:** Small terraces built for planting bushes to stabilise a slope. Photo: J. Schoeneberger

Their previous experiences in testing and documenting sustainable land-use methods helped to conceive the programme, which is based on relatively simple but effective methods that the peasants can implement themselves. This includes, for example, construction of terraces on a larger scale [Figure 6], construction of erosion channels, protection of slopes from overgrazing, introduction of keeping animals in stables, and reforestation.

The units for planning and implementation of the conservation programme are middle-sized river catchment

areas, each of about 10,000 ha. The first step in each area is the elaboration of a problem analysis, carried out by national advisors in cooperation with the local villagers, followed by the elaboration of a so-called "rehabilitation and management plan". This process can take six months or longer, but it is of highest relevance for the success of the subsequent steps. Only if the villagers are in accordance with the measures and identify themselves with them, they are going to carry out the following steps of the programme in a sustainable way. [Figure 7]

**Figure 7:** A group of peasants resting from working on gullies. Photo: J. Schoeneberger





**Figure 8:** The gully formed after a street washed away.  
Photo: J. Schoeneberger



As the second step, the measures fixed in the plans are implemented; for example, the construction of terraces on the slopes. [Figures 8 and 9] This phase lasts between two and four years and requires an enormous work effort on the part of the peasants, a change of established customs (i.e., the change to keeping animals in stables), and some high cost investments. The costs are covered, to a large extent, by the development partners of Ethiopia, like the World Bank, the European Union, as well as Norwegian, Finnish, Canadian and German development co-operations. The German federal government supports the programme financially through the KfW (*Kreditanstalt für Wiederaufbau*) and through technical advice from GIZ. The Ethiopian government covers the considerable personnel costs of the local advisors to the peasants. In addition to governmental agricultural experts in the district administrations, the government supports a huge network of local advisors. It is probably

a worldwide unique approach to provide three advisors, educated in professional schools, to each village: one for animal breeding, one for plant cultivation, and one for management of natural resources. Only with this structure of the permanent presence of advisors in the villages can the regional implementation of the SLM programme be successful. The local advisors receive further on-the-job training from Ethiopian GIZ experts ("training of the trainers").

#### **Important long-term economic benefit**

In the third phase of the programme, the so-called "economic development phase", the farmers are supported in managing the newly gained fields more economically and more profitably. This is done with improved seeds and adequate crop rotation, the introduction of fruit and vegetable cultivation for the market, and the local

**Figure 9:** Same location after the stabilisation of the slope.  
Photo: J. Schoeneberger







◀ **Figure 10:** Large hillside with terraced fields. Photo: J. Schoeneberger



◀ **Figure 11:** Detail of terraced fields. Photo: J. Schoeneberger

processing of products like honey, plant oil and milk. The greatest economic effect is achieved through the introduction of irrigation agriculture. [Figures 10 and 11] Now, during the short but heavy rainy season, the water no longer runs off the surface but, instead, seeps slowly into the ground of the terraces and reforested slopes, resulting in a rise of groundwater levels by slowly filling up the natural underground water reservoirs. This water then appears in springs further down the valley, or can be used through wells for irrigation. This provides a double benefit: for one, the irrigation secures the main harvest by bridging the dry season now appearing more often

because of climate change. And for another, the farmers can prepare a second harvest, for example vegetables for the market, where they can get an extra good price when supply is low.

The economic effects are a decisive factor for the programme's sustainability: once the support by the SLM programme has ended, the farmers will continue to care for and maintain the terraces and slopes only if they see long-term benefits arising from the measures. Although Ethiopian farmers are rather conservative, especially when they are poor and cannot afford to take risks, the

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#### Documentary

- A World Bank/TerrAfrica documentary titled "Regreening Ethiopia's Highlands: A New Hope for Africa" showcases the success of the Sustainable Land Management Programme. Available at: <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nak-UUZnvPI>>



▲ **Figure 12:** Visible benefits where farmers have already successfully implemented the methods ... Photo: J. Schoeneberger



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change processes are generally very well accepted. Especially innovations that were successful in other villages under similar conditions are copied quickly. For example: the rather drought-resistant and high-yield hybrid wheat-rye called "triticale" that was introduced by GIZ has quickly spread in the Amhara region. Also, on-farm bull fattening spreads very quickly as an alternative to free grazing after the farmers realised that they can make more money that way and the new method is less destructive to the landscape. In fact, one of the most successful measures for spreading change is to organise visits for new participants to those villages where farmers have already successfully implemented the methods. [Figure 12] Not surprising: the farmers accept successful methods more easily and quickly from their peers than from consultants.

The large-scale acceptance by the farmers gives a clear indication of the programme's success and the quality of advice. A general rule is: about one-third of the villages implement the content of the plans as wished and prescribed by the programme. The support is needed for about 5 to 7 years. Another third of the participants do even more than expected and develop, by themselves, additional measures and, after a short time (less than 5 years), do not require any more support. In another third of the villages, the programme does not work properly, either because convincing leaders are missing or the community has internal conflicts or there are more lucrative alternatives to the arduous rehabilitation work (for example, temporary migration for picking coffee, etc.). In these villages, the programme closes down after about three years of support. This proportion of 1/3, 1/3, 1/3 seems to be an acceptable quota of success.

### **Achievements of the programme so far (in 2016)**

- The area now managed with sustainable methods in the 670 participating village communities has been increased by 390,000 ha.
- More than 2,000 ha of arable land can now be permanently irrigated.
- The productivity of the three most important crops in the programme area has increased by 20%. The yield of wheat and corn has increased by approximately 80%. The annual quantity of cow milk has increased by nearly 40%.
- More than 190,000 peasant families benefit from this increase in productivity. Many of them have been able to increase their productivity beyond subsistence farming and now sell the surplus in the local markets.

The visibility of the programme's success has resulted in other small farmers, outside the programme area, adopting the measures even without external support.

And there are further indirect effects of the programme: for one, the small farmers are better prepared against the effects of climate change. During the last great drought in 2015, it became obvious that the farmers in the programme area were less affected by crop shortfalls than farmers in neighbouring regions. And last but not least, the decrease in soil erosion and sediment deposits has considerably increased the lifespan of the many dams that are supposed to contribute to the country's intended position as an exporter of renewable energy.



# International Land Deals in Ethiopia

Ingrid Hartmann

## Internationale Geschäfte mit Agrarland in Äthiopien

*Parallel zur landwirtschaftlichen Produktionssteigerung durch Erosionsschutz und Verbesserung der ländlichen Infrastruktur will die äthiopische Regierung über die Verpachtung großer Agrarflächen an ausländische Firmen Exporte und Deviseneinnahmen generieren. An Beispielen werden die fragwürdigen Ergebnisse dieser Verpachtungspolitik dargestellt. Unter anderem ist die Verdrängung oftmals halbnomadischer Bevölkerungsgruppen aus ihren Lebensräumen weiterhin ein großes Problem und auch die angestrebte Nahrungsmittelsicherheit im Land konnte bisher nicht gewährleistet werden.*

In Africa, Ethiopia is the country with the largest number of international land deals, summing up at about 1 mio. hectares of land in 2016 alone. It is followed, in Africa, by Ghana. Worldwide, Indonesia concluded the largest number (123) and the largest total areas (3 million ha) of land deals, followed in area size by Ukraine, Russia, Papua New Guinea and Brazil (Nolte, Chamberlain, Giger 2016).

In Ethiopia, between 1981 and 2016 agriculture<sup>1</sup> contributed on average 50.11% to the national GDP (World Bank 2016). Nevertheless, for many years the country has not been food secure, nor food self-sufficient, despite an average GDP growth of 10% from 2016 to 2018 and an average growth of 5.85% from 1981 to 2017 (Trading Economics 2018). The government has been pursuing a two-pronged strategy to increase agricultural productivity and national food security: the strategy of "Agricultural Development Led Industrialisation" (ADLI) and the "Production Safety Net" approach. The latter is implemented mainly in the east, where the land hardly nourishes the farmer. Here, farmers on marginal land receive food for work and other support for infrastructural work to make the land more productive (work in erosion protection, etc.). ADLI was integrated into the Sustainable Development and Poverty Reduction Programme (SDPRP) in 2002. It is a strategy implemented on more productive land. However, industrialising agriculture, which the government strives for, requires large investments into infrastructure: access roads, water for irrigation, etc., for which the state provides financial resources, but the resources are not sufficient.

"In 2009 the federal government decided to more actively encourage large-scale land investment [...]. Five key regions for land deals were chosen in Afar, Southern Nations, Nationalities and People's Region/SNNPR, Gambella, Benishangul-Gumuz and Oromia and asked to identify parcels of land of 5000 ha and above that would be suitable for large-scale agriculture. A total of 3.31 million ha was identified in 2009. The proportional distributions of the areas are in Oromia (37%), Afar (12%), SNNPR (5%), Benishangul-Gumuz (21%) and Gambella (25%)" (Keeley et al. 2014: 15). "The establishment of this land bank was based on satellite imaging of the regions and was therefore imprecise regarding communities or important

natural resources on the ground" (Keeley et al. 2014: 14-15). In practice, only a small amount has been subject to further verification.

The state owns all land, and large-scale land leasing is predominantly done in less densely settled areas, where minority ethnic groups often live as herders or pastoralists. The government claims it allocates only unoccupied or underused land to investors, but there is no clear definition of "unoccupied" and "underused".

## Prerequisites and procedures with respect to land deals

For large-scale investment (> 5,000 ha), investors have to present a business plan and apply for a licence at the Ethiopian Investment Agency (IEA), an autonomous government body ([www.ethiopia.gov.et/investment](http://www.ethiopia.gov.et/investment)). If the aims of the investors and government are in full accordance, the Development Bank of Ethiopia can provide credits for the investment. Frequently, not only is collateral not even required to obtain these credits, but relevant tax exemptions are also granted. This is bound to the conditions that the investor produces mainly for export or that the produced crop, such as grain, serves national food security or is provided for the national market. Investors are partly exempted from income tax and receive other incentives (Ethiopian Investment Committee website). Financial benefits to the investors are in general larger the more the company exports, which makes clear that this agricultural policy focuses on income in foreign currency. The World Bank and the IMF support governments to improve the "business climate" for such investments (Keeley et al. 2014).

Investors lease land for fixed periods, such as for instance 15 to 50 years (Keeley et al. 2014). During this time, they are protected from termination, except in cases where they violate the contract or public interest; in this case, the investor may request full compensation. Investors are often required to hire local staff, while foreign staff should only be employed in cases of special qualification requirements. Then the investor is requested to develop a training programme to enable a local staff.

## 1

Agriculture includes forestry, hunting and fishing as well as the cultivation of crops and livestock production, according to ISIC (International Standard Industrial Classification).

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## Main actors

The major large-scale investors come from India, Israel, the US, and Saudi Arabia. One of them, the oil billionaire Sheikh Al Amoudi, is registered as a national due to his Ethiopian-Saudi origin.

Nevertheless, most investors are Ethiopians themselves, frequently from the diaspora, or Ethiopian partners of foreign companies. The Ethiopian government also invests in plantations as part of the Growth and Transformation Plan (GTP) framework, which strives for full national food security in Ethiopia.

The advantages from international investments expected by the Ethiopian government are the provision of infrastructure and know-how that the country is unable to supply itself, the increase in local production and employment in the rural sector, as well as higher foreign exchange earnings.

## Examples of large-scale foreign investments in agricultural land

One of the most prominent examples is the company Karuturi Global Ltd. from India. In November 2010, Karuturi leased 100,000 ha in Gambella, with the option of leasing an additional 200,000 ha if the project was finalised within two years. It aimed at producing maize, oil, rice, flowers and sugar for export. But by 2013, Karuturi had cultivated only 12,000 ha. Due to financial and tax problems in similar projects in Kenya, Karuturi could not repay the loans in Ethiopia. Even though the cultivated land was much smaller than initially planned, the deforestation and cultivation had led to numerous evictions of the indigenous population, mostly Anuak, whose subsistence is based on forest products. The size of the deforestation concerned many ecologists due to both the loss of biodiversity and biomass as well as the loss of the water storage and soil protection functions of the forest (Environmental Justice Atlas 2017). In 2015, the Ethiopian government cancelled the contract with Karuturi, as the expected "development of the land" had not taken place. Karuturi decided to leave Ethiopia, requesting compensation for the "failed land deals" (Bloomberg 2017). While *The Reporter* (2018) reported in April 2018 that Karuturi had settled its disputes with the government and was willing to restart on 25,000 ha in Ethiopia, in March 2018 the company assets in Kenya were auctioned (Daily Nations 2018) due to insolvency. Nevertheless, to date Karuturi is one of the world's largest producers of flowers.

Another mega-project is from the Saudi Star Agricultural Development, a company owned by Sheikh Al Amoudi. Saudi Star promotes the Saudi government's own food security programme through export investment in Ethiopia (Sheikh Al Amoudi 2018). In 2008, Saudi Star leased 10,000 ha of land from the Ethiopian government to produce rice by irrigation (Environmental Justice Atlas 2017). The project started in 2012, while in parallel a government programme, "Provision of Basic Services" (PBS), financed by the World Bank, supported the "villagisation" of parts of the population, thus preparing the land for agro-industry (Business and Human Rights Resource Centre 2015). Complaints against the Ethiopian government and the World Bank for "clearing" the land before leasing it to investors are multiple, and include Inclusive Development International (2015) and Human Rights Watch (2012). Saudi Star, in the meantime, continues to invest in

Ethiopia. In January 2018, Sheikh Al Amoudi was detained in the Saudi Arabian crackdown against corruption (ESAT 2018), but then released in May 2018 (Gulf Business 2018).

In 2007, the German company Flora EcoPower Holding AG leased 56,000 ha in Oromia for bio-fuel production and acquired concessions for 200,000 more ha. Large parts of this land were part of the Babile Elephant Sanctuary. The cultivating work was soon stopped by the central government and the company moved, using other parts of their land (TAZ 2010). Nevertheless, the palm seed production was closed due to financial shortages in 2010. Unpaid employees absorbed some of the company's assets (Afrik-News 2010). In 2011, production started again, now under the changed name of Acasis AG, but it never reached production goals. In 2015, the company went bankrupt in Germany (Anleihen-Finder 2015).

## Critical voices

Large-scale land leases are seen very critically by some international organisations. To protect the native population against negative impacts of such land deals, a code of conduct was elaborated by the FAO, IFAD, UNCTAD<sup>2</sup> and World Bank (World Bank Group et al. 2010). It was meant "to convert the curse into a blessing" (Cotula et al. 2009). This code of conduct, however, helped reduce the world-wide protests against global land-grabbing (Borras & Franco 2010). The principles of this code of conduct (World Bank Group et al. 2010: 2ff):

- "1. Existing rights to land and associated natural resources are recognised and respected.
2. Investments do not jeopardise food security but rather strengthen it.
3. Processes for accessing land [...] and making investments are transparent, monitored and ensure accountability by all stakeholders [...].
4. All those materially affected are consulted, and agreements from consultations are recorded and enforced.
5. Investors ensure that projects respect the rule of law, reflect industry best practices, are viable economically, and result in durable shared value.
6. Investments generate desirable social and distributional impacts and do not increase vulnerability.
7. Environmental impacts due to a project are quantified and measures are taken to encourage sustainable resource use while minimising the risk of negative impacts."

## Transparency and land rights

Initially, the Ethiopian Ministry of Agriculture and the Ethiopian Agricultural Portal ([www.eap.gov.et](http://www.eap.gov.et)) published the large-scale land leasing projects and related contracts. The data situation on the website has worsened since 2012: today, the website is offline.

According to Borras and Franco (2010), many land users don't even know that the land they are living on is leased out. Thus, land leasing is often not based upon a "prior informed consensus", as requested in the previously mentioned code of conduct. Dessalegn (2011): "The state has juridical ownership of the land and, in contrast, peasant farmers and pastoralists have the right of use only. It is the state which in effect has been responsible for land

grabbing: it has used its statutory right of ownership to alienate land from those who have customary rights and long-standing rights of usage, and transferring it, without consultation or consent, to investors from outside the communities [...] as well as from outside the country [...]."

Nevertheless, the Ethiopian government has another view on it, claiming that "unused land", located in warmer climates in the lowlands and suitable for agriculture, is leased out, while most of the Ethiopian farmers cultivate the cooler highlands. However, the concept of the "unused land" has received much criticism (Borras & Franco 2010). In many cases, pastureland, grasslands, forested areas and waterways are used or cultivated by local communities not continuously but seasonally as common land in order to support their way of life.

## Sustainability

Ethiopia is an international hotspot for biodiversity, and the forests are substantial carbon sequestration sinks. Nevertheless, biodiversity policies show amazing contradictions to the land policy: the Karuturi plantation in Gambella transverses the National Park of Gambella.

Ethiopia has been accepting funding from the global REDD+ programmes (Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation) since 2014 (UNEP 2016). The ongoing deforestation for agricultural plantations reduces the opportunities to compensate for foregone losses of agricultural use. The government could thus generate additional income from the carbon sequestration potential in Gambella by not expelling forest dwellers but, instead, including them in the scheme for conservation measures.

## Sharing of benefits

The structure of contract modalities illustrates that substantial frameworks were indeed created to share benefits with the local population, but with little success. Few infrastructure improvements have been carried out. On the contrary, Karuturi, at least in Gambella, failed due to a lack of infrastructure and was apparently unable to establish it on its own.

The expectations of greater employment opportunities at the plantations were often also not fulfilled, although opportunities did slightly increase. Based on figures from 2009 on cases in Ethiopia, Deininger and Byerlee (2011: 64) limit job-creation expectations to only 0.005 jobs/ha. But these possible jobs are not set off against all the lost income opportunities in hunting, beekeeping, pastoralism, and small-scale farming. The employment potential of large plantations is especially low.

## Trade and food security

The Ethiopian government's food security strategy has been described as a combination of ADLI and "productive safety nets" (Lavers 2011). Both traits are mirrored in the incentives for investors described above, but apparently production for export is prioritised in the government's land-lease policies.

## Conclusions

Promises for employment, qualifications and infrastructure (such as schools or hospitals) were mostly not

fulfilled. Today, in 2018, most of the large land deals seem to have rather failed. According to statements by the Ethiopian government, at least Karuturi (Tesfa News 2015) did not meet the expectations in the slightest.

Who is more responsible for the failure – the investors for not delivering on the expectations, or the Ethiopian government for making contracts discriminating the local population – is open for discussion.

The lessons learned are hardly new. The projects failed because the farmers had to leave their land and find alternative livelihoods without being involved, which led to protests that were often violently repressed instead of ending in a dialogue between the government and local populations. Tropical forests, cleared for plantations, lose their natural water- and nutrient-retention capacities and soil-production functions. Additionally, options to gain income from the REDD programmes are lost. Dessalegn interprets the so-called "landgrab" not as a grab of only land, but also as a grab of the rights of individuals and communities. "Stated briefly [...] what is at stake is the land and the resources on it, and what is being grabbed or transferred are rights belonging to individuals and communities despite the claims of governments that the lands in question are 'unused' public lands and do not belong to anyone. (Dessalegn 2011: 4)"

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# TRIALOG

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## Nachruf für Professor Lothar Götz \* 1925 † 2018

Am 17. April 2018 ist der Architekt und Hochschullehrer Prof. Lothar Götz im Alter von 92 Jahren in Heidelberg gestorben. Sein Name ist den jüngeren TRIALOG-Lesern wahrscheinlich nicht geläufig, sein Tod sollte aber Anlass sein, uns an seine frühe und aktive Rolle zu erinnern, was die Anfänge der Lehre und Forschung zur "Dritten Welt" und zum "Planen und Bauen in Entwicklungsländern" betrifft.

Lothar Götz studierte, nach seiner Rückkehr 1946 aus der Kriegsgefangenschaft, in Karlsruhe Architektur, legte seine Diplomprüfung mit Auszeichnung ab und war von 1953-61 Wissenschaftlicher Assistent bei Egon Eiermann. 1963 wurde er Ordentlicher Professor an der Fakultät für Architektur und Stadtplanung der Universität Stuttgart, war dort mehrfach Dekan und bis zu seiner Emeritierung 1993 Direktor des Instituts für Baustofflehre, Bauphysik, Technischen Ausbau und Entwerfen (IBBTE).

Lothar Götz war ein leidenschaftlicher, von Egon Eiermann und der klassischen Moderne geprägter Architekt, der über Jahrzehnte hinweg erfolgreiche Büros in Heidelberg und Stuttgart betrieb. Die Liste seiner Projekte ist vielseitig und hat insbesondere das Heidelberger Stadtbild mitgeprägt, so z.B. die zwei Personal-Hochhäuser und das Seminargebäude der Universität Heidelberg sowie das Wasser- und Schifffahrtsamt. Darüber hinaus baute er zwei Rathäuser, ein Bildungszentrum, ein Gemeindehaus, Wohnhäuser und vieles mehr. Architekturgeschichtlich besonders interessant ist ein frühes Projekt von 1951: eine Serie von kreisrunden Tankstellen aus Stahl und Glas von eleganter Funktionalität. Aber Lothar Götz war keineswegs ein "dogmatischer" Funktionalist, wie seine späteren Stadtansierungs-Projekte zeigen, die sich mit großer Sensibilität auf den besonderen Ort einlassen.

Als Direktor des IBBTE blickte er weit über die deutsche und europäische Baukultur hinaus. Angeregt durch die Architectural Association (AA) in London und Otto Königsberger, dem Autor bahnbrechender Publikationen zum Thema "Tropical Building", interessierte er sich früh für die sogenannte "Dritte Welt" und für die speziellen Anforderungen, die das Bauen in Entwicklungsländern an Architekten stellt. Seine Lehrveranstaltungen zielten darauf, das Entwerfen unter anderen kulturellen, klimatischen und technischen Bedingungen zu üben und praxistaugliche Vorschläge zu erarbeiten. Umfassende sozio-ökonomische Analysen und fundamentale Kapitalismus-Kritik, wie sie um 1970 im Zuge der Studentenbewegung populär wurden, überließ er lieber jenen, die sich dazu berufen fühlten. Dies machte ihn zeitweise zur Lieblings-Zielscheibe extrem linker Hochschulgruppen (KSG, ML), die ihm unterstellten, in den Entwicklungsländern vor allem die Interessen der deutschen Bau- und Zementindustrie zu verfolgen. Für alle, die Lothar Götz und seine soziale Einstellung kannten, war dies natürlich grober Unfug. Im Übrigen war Lothar Götz mit genügend Humor ausgestattet, um über manche abwegige Anschuldigung ("Steigbügelhalter des Imperialismus") auch herzlich zu lachen.

Ein motivierender Hochschullehrer war Lothar Götz bei den ausgedehnten, heute schon legendären Exkursionen der frühen 1970er Jahre. Reisen in ferne Länder wie Zambia, Malaysia und Sansibar waren damals ein neues und didaktisch innovatives Lehrformat, um den Studierenden ein konkretes Bild der lokalen

Lothar Götz



Verhältnisse zu vermitteln und aus eigener Anschauung eine Studienarbeit zu entwickeln. Dies wurde in einer Schriftenreihe dokumentiert, was dazu beitrug, dass sich in Stuttgart über die Jahre hinweg überproportional viele Studierende für das Thema "Planen und Bauen in Entwicklungsländern" interessierten und entsprechende Entwürfe und Diplomarbeiten anfertigten, bis hin zu ambitionierten regionalplanerischen Ansätzen für das in den 1960er Jahren entkolonialisierte Ostafrika. Das Konzept der freien, d.h. nicht vorgegebenen Entwurfsthemen, das in Stuttgart bis heute gepflegt wird, kam solchen individuellen Interessen sehr entgegen. Das Engagement führte nicht selten auch zu einer beruflichen Weichenstellung, wie etwa in meinem Fall, dies zunächst als Student und Teilnehmer der Zambia-Exkursion und später als Kollege in Stuttgart, wo sich 1991 im Städtebau-Institut das Fachgebiet "SIAAL - Städtebau in Asien, Afrika und Lateinamerika" etablierte, das ab 2011 als "Internationaler Städtebau" unter der Leitung von Prof. Dr. Philipp Misselwitz und nachfolgend von Prof. Dr. Astrid Ley weiter ausgebaut und institutionell festgelegt wurde.

Mit den beiden Instituten IBBTE und SI gab es in Stuttgart viele Jahre lang ein Lehrangebot zur "Dritten Welt", das von Gebäudekunde, Konstruktion und Klima bis hin zum Städtebau und zur Stadtplanung reichte, wobei die Wohnungsprobleme der Entwicklungsländer oft im Mittelpunkt standen. Dies zeigen auch die 35 Dissertationen, die Lothar Götz in seinen Stuttgarter Jahren betreute – fast ausschließlich Doktoranden aus Asien, Afrika und Lateinamerika, die in ihm immer einen freundlichen und unterstützenden Doktorvater fanden.

So war Prof. Lothar Götz sicher einer der Pioniere, die das Interesse am Planen und Bauen in Asien, Afrika und Lateinamerika, an außereuropäischen Baukulturen und an der weltweiten Verstädterung außerordentlich gefördert und dazu beigetragen haben, dieses Lehr- und Forschungsfeld an deutschen Hochschulen zu etablieren. Wir haben aber mit Lothar Götz nicht nur einen frühen "Dritte-Welt-Pionier" verloren, sondern auch einen erfolgreichen deutschen Architekten und Erben der klassischen Moderne, vor allem aber einen überaus freundlichen, humorvollen und aufgeschlossenen Menschen, der nie laut die Trommel für seine Sache schlug, sich aber nachdrücklich, korrekt und ausgleichend für alles einsetzte, was er als gut und richtig erkannte.

Prof. Eckhart Ribbeck



Fulda, Tankstelle der Fa. Opel-Fahr, 1951, Arch.: Lothar Götz

# Editorial

Äthiopien durchläuft eine rasante Entwicklung mit dem Ziel, von einer überwiegend auf Subsistenz basierenden Ökonomie zu einem Land mit mittleren Einkommen und industrieller Entwicklung aufzusteigen. Der Staat unterstützt großflächige, exportorientierte industrielle Landwirtschaft und Industrieansiedlungen, oft mit internationaler Finanzierung. Er fördert aber auch kleine und mittlere Betriebe. Der frühere Premierminister Meles Zenawi setzte dabei auf das Konzept des „*Developmental State*“, in dem der Staat eine führende wirtschaftliche Rolle spielt. Nationale Strategien zielen auf Reduzierung von Armut, Gesundheitsversorgung, Ausbildung und Zugang zu Basis-Infrastruktur.

Mit diesem TRIALOG-Heft wollen wir die historischen und aktuellen Entwicklungen Äthiopiens aufzeigen, die Chancen und Herausforderungen einer Veränderung im Interesse auch der Menschen, die unter prekären Bedingungen leben. Dass ein TRIALOG-Heft diese Vielfalt nicht abdecken kann, ist offensichtlich: wir haben versucht, die Themen anzusprechen, die uns für ein Verständnis der Entwicklung wesentlich erscheinen.

Die aktuelle Entwicklung Addis Abebas scheint – vereinfacht – getrieben von fünf Tendenzen: 1. dem von der Stadtverwaltung initiierten Wohnungsbauprogramm; 2. Investitionen internationalen Kapitals, das Hochhäuser und Einkaufszentren im Stadtzentrum erstellt; 3. der Verdichtung der traditionellen Kebele-Bebauung und dem Wachsen informeller Siedlungen mit Zustrom von ländlichen Migrant\*innen sowie Flüchtlingen; 4. großen Infrastrukturprojekten der Regierung, vor allem Straßen und Nahverkehrssystemen, oft von chinesischen Firmen gebaut und mit chinesischen Krediten finanziert; und 5. internationalen und einheimischen Industrieinvestitionen – z.B. in die Textilindustrie.

Das komplexe Szenario im Lande wird ergänzt durch die Herausforderung, mehr als 80 Ethnien – mit jeweils unterschiedlichen Kulturen und Lebensweisen – in Einklang zu bringen. Hier stellt sich die Frage, welche „Modernität“ und welche Form von „Entwicklung“ gewollt ist und in den einzelnen Regionen gebraucht wird. Wie kann die Regierung, zusammen mit der lokalen Bevölkerung, einen eigenständigen und angemessenen Weg finden, um die Lebensverhältnisse im ganzen Land zu verbessern? Welchen Beitrag können Stadtplaner zu einer inklusiven Entwicklung leisten?

Im ersten Artikel stellt **Hans Harms** den komplexen Prozess der feudalen Staatsbildung Äthiopiens in Abgrenzung zum europäischen Kolonialismus vor, der die oft beschworene Außergewöhnlichkeit des Landes begründete, die sich auch im Modell der staatlich geleiteten Wirtschaftsentwicklung spiegelt. Er fragt, ob es Äthiopien darauf aufbauend gelingen kann, ein eigenständiges, nachhaltiges und inklusives Leitbild für die Zukunft zu entwickeln. **Laura von Puttkamer** und **Hans Harms** verfolgen die Stadtplanungsgeschichte Addis Abebas mit den unterschiedlichen Planungsansätzen verschiedener Regierungssysteme, die gemeinsam mit der informellen Siedlungsentwicklung den Stadtgrundriss prägten. Die Stadt wird heute durch Hochhaustürme und Nahverkehrssysteme überformt, konnte bislang jedoch ihre Kultur der Nachbarschaftsnetzwerke und traditionellen Vereinigungen bewahren, die immer noch eine wichtige Rolle im alltäglichen Leben und in der lokalen Entwicklung spielen. **Sascha Delz** untersucht das Integrierte Wohnungsbauprogramm in Addis Abeba, mit dem die

Stadtverwaltung, unterstützt von der ehemaligen GTZ (heute GIZ), zwischen 2004 und 2010 etwa 80.000 Wohneinheiten erstellte. Er kritisiert die allein auf Privateigentum zielende Umsetzung, die soziale und räumliche Segregation beförderte sowie die standardisierte Bauweise, die nur eingeschränkt auf die traditionellen Lebensgewohnheiten der Bewohner eingeht. **Monika Wiebusch** erläutert, wie es in diesem Programm zur ausschließlichen Entscheidung für Eigentumswohnungen kam und welche Herausforderungen diese neue Wohnform mit sich brachte. Das sinnvolle Vorhaben eines Integrierten Regionalen Entwicklungsplans für Addis Abeba und die umliegenden Städte in Oromia startete 2012 und führte 2015 in ein politisches Debakel. **Melaku Tanku** verfolgt die Widerstände gegen den Planungsprozess mit all seinen kulturellen, politischen und institutionellen Dimensionen und versucht, sachliche und kommunikative Fehlentscheidungen zu identifizieren, die in der Zukunft vermieden werden sollten. Südafrika und Äthiopien entwickelten in den letzten Jahrzehnten groß angelegte Wohnungsbauprogramme für untere Einkommen. **Beate Lohnert** unterzieht die unterschiedlichen Ansätze im post-Apartheid Südafrika und in Äthiopien einer kritischen Analyse und problematisiert das sehr verschieden interpretierte Kriterium der „Angemessenheit“. Die Äthiopische Verfassung definierte 1994 erstmals Regionalstaaten und machte so die Bildung neuer regionaler Hauptstädte erforderlich. **Leake Tesfamariam** und **Monika Wiebusch** beschreiben den Entwicklungsprozess von Semera, der am Zeichenbrett entwickelten neuen Hauptstadt für die Afar-Region. **Nadine Appelhans** analysiert die alltäglichen Urbanisierungsprozesse in vier Quartieren der mittelgroßen Stadt Bahir Dar und empfiehlt, sie nicht als gegen die staatliche Planung gerichtet zu interpretieren, sondern sie in Stadtentwicklungsstrategien einzubinden und dabei ihre Stärken – stufenweise Entwicklung, Vielfalt, temporäre Wohnformen und lokale Wissensproduktion – zu nutzen. **Elke Beyer** und **Anke Hagemann** untersuchen große Standorte der Textilindustrie in staatlich erstellten Industrieparks in Addis Abeba und anderen Städten. Sie analysieren die Einbindung globaler Produktionsketten in den städtischen Raum und fragen nach Potentialen sowie Konflikten, die sich aus den ambitionierten äthiopischen Industrialisierungsprogrammen ergeben. **Johannes Schoeneberger** stellt ein Programm zum nachhaltigen Boden- und Wasserschutz im von Subsistenzlandwirtschaft geprägten, dicht besiedelten Hochland vor, das mit relativ einfachen Methoden gute Wirkungen zeigt und örtlich große Akzeptanz findet. Im letzten Beitrag untersucht **Ingrid Hartmann** die Verpachtung von Agrarland für großflächige Exportproduktion sowie zur Devisenbeschaffung und stellt in Frage, dass diese stark geförderten ausländischen Investitionen zur Verbesserung des Wohlstands und zur Ernährungssicherheit des Landes beitragen.

Nach Jahren der sozialen und ethnischen Auseinandersetzungen hat 2018 der neue Premier Abiy Ahmed, erster Oromo in dieser Rolle, positive Akzente gesetzt: ein Friedensvertrag mit Eritrea ist abgeschlossen, politische Häftlinge wurden freigelassen, Presse- und Meinungsfreiheit scheinen wieder hergestellt. Die Zukunft wird zeigen, wie Äthiopien die Herausforderungen meistern wird, die aus weiter hohem Bevölkerungswachstum und zunehmenden ökologischen Problemen in Stadt und Land erwachsen und nach nachhaltigen und kulturell angepassten Lösungen verlangen.

**Hans Harms, Klaus Teschner, Monika Wiebusch**

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# Forthcoming Events / Veranstaltungen

## **October 01–05, 2018 in Bodø, Norway**

54<sup>th</sup> ISOCARP Congress 2018: "Cool Planning: Changing Climate and our Urban Future". Organised by the International Society of City and Regional Planners (ISOCARP). More Information: <<https://isocarp.org/2018congress/>>

## **October 14–17, 2018 in Cape Town, South Africa**

Planning Africa 2018 Conference: "The Making of Modern African Cities", organized by the South African Planning Institute (SAPI). More information: <[www.planningafrica.org.za/](http://www.planningafrica.org.za/)>

## **October 19, 2018 in Aachen, Germany**

Conference on Social Housing: Future trends and development potential (German spoken), organized by RWTH Aachen University. More information: <<http://ipe.arch.rwth-aachen.de/cms/IPE/Die-Organisation-seinheit/Aktuelle-Veranstaltungen/~qwx/~/Musterveranstaltung/>>

## **October 29–31, 2018 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia**

Conference "Through local eyes". Organized by ECIP - Emerging Cities Integrated Planning Lab at the EIABC (Ethiopian Institute of Architecture, Building Construction and City Development, University of Addis Ababa), with the support of the Université libre de Bruxelles (Faculty of Architecture La Cambre Horta and Brussels School of Engineering) and the Université de Liège (Gembloux Agro-Bio Tech). Conference website: <<https://www.conferenceaddis2018.org/>>

## **November 07–08, 2018 in Wageningen, Netherlands**

ResNexus 2018 Conference: Rethinking urban resilience. Hosted by the Environmental Policy and Research Group at Wageningen University in conjunction with the ResNexus project partners Science Policy Research Unit (SPRU) at the University of Sussex and the Faculty of Public Health at the University of São Paulo. More Information: <<https://www.resnexus2018.org/>>

## **November 07–08, 2018 in Milan, Italy**

Integrating Cities Conference VIII – Cities4people: Migrating Ideas, Inspiring Integration. The Conference is part of a series of policy events underpinning the EURO CITIES Integrating Cities Charter process which started in 2010. More Information: <[www.integratingcities.eu/integrating-cities/events](http://www.integratingcities.eu/integrating-cities/events)>

## **Nov. 08–10, 2018 in Stuttgart, Germany**

N-AERUS Annual Conference 2018 "Housing and Human Settlements in a World of Change". Organised by the Department of International Urbanism at University of Stuttgart. Contact: <[naerus2018@si.uni-stuttgart.de](mailto:naerus2018@si.uni-stuttgart.de)>

## **November 12–13, 2018 in Esch-sur-Alzette, Luxembourg**

3<sup>rd</sup> Affordable Housing Forum: Towards new Cultures of Affordable Housing? More Information: <<https://www.liser.lu/?type=news&id=1552>>

## **Nov. 13–16, 2018 in Cascais, Portugal**

15 Congress of the International Association of Educating Cities (IAEC) will be oriented by the theme "The City Belongs to its People". More information: <<http://cascais.pt/area/15th-international-congress-educating-cities>>

## **Nov. 20–24, 2018 in Marrakech, Morocco**

Africities 8<sup>th</sup> Summit. Theme: The Transition Towards Sustainable Cities and Territories: Role of Local and Regional Governments of Africa. More Information: <<https://www.africities.org/>>

## **Nov. 25–27, 2018 in Sitges, Barcelona, Spain**

Urban Transitions 2018 – Integrating urban and transport planning, environment and health for healthier urban living. Organised by ELSEVIER, supports by ISGlobal (Instituto Salud Global Barcelona). More Information: <<https://www.elsevier.com/events/conferences/urban-transitions>>

## **November 26–27, 2018 in Padua, Italy**

International Conference "Cities, territories and the struggles for human rights: a 2030 perspective". Organisation: University of Padova Human Rights Centre 'Antonio Papisca'. Further Information: <<http://unipd-centrodirittumani.it/en/attivita/International-Conference-Cities-territories-and-the-struggles-for-human-rights-a-2030-perspective/1192>>

## **December 05–07, 2018 in Rome, Italy**

2<sup>nd</sup> International Conference on: Green Urbanism: "The Periphery as a Catalyst for Energy and Skills". Organised by International Experts for Research Enrichment and Knowledge Exchange (IEREK). More Information: <<https://www.ierek.com/events/green-urbanism-2nd-edition#introduction>>

## **December 07, 2018 in Istanbul, Turkey**

VI. International Contemporary Urban Issues Conference on Informality CUI'18. Coordinated by DAKAM (Eastern Mediterranean Academic Research Centre), organized by BILSAS (Science, Art, Sport Productions). More Information: <<https://www.dakamconferences.org/cui/>>

## **December 10–12, 2018 in Barcelona, Spain**

11<sup>th</sup> International Forum on Urbanism (IFOU) Congress 2018. Aligning Sustainability and Resilience. Organized by the Urban Resilience research Network (URNet), the School of Architecture Universitat Internacional de Catalunya (UIC Barcelona) and the UN Habitat City Resilience Profiling Program (CRPP). More Information: <<http://2018reframingurbanresilience.org/>>

## **December 10–12, 2018 in Hong Kong**

Passive and Low Energy Architecture 2018 Conference: Smart and Healthy within the 2-degree Limit. Further Information: <[www.plea2018.org/](http://www.plea2018.org/)>

## **April 02–04, 2019 in Victoria, British Columbia, Canada**

Canadian Housing and Renewal Association's (CHRA) 51<sup>st</sup> National Congress on Housing and Homelessness. More Information: <<https://chra-achru.ca/en/call-for-proposals-congress-2019>>

## **April 24–27, 2019 in Los Angeles, USA**

49<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference of the Urban Affairs Association: Claiming Rights to the City: Community, Capital, and the state. More Information: <<http://urbanaffairsassociation.org/conference/program/view-general-schedule/>>

## **May 06–08, 2019 in Hanover, Germany**

Herrenhausen Conference: Urban Agricultural Heritage and the Shaping of Future Cities. More Information: <[www.ua-heritage.com/](http://www.ua-heritage.com/)>

## **May 22–24, 2019 in Helsinki, Finland**

Sustainable Built Environment (SBE) Conference: Clean Planet, Happy People & Shared Prosperity – Emerging Concepts for Sustainable Built Environment. More information: <<https://www.ril.fi/en/events/sbe-2019.html>>

## **May 22–24, 2019 in Oslo, Norway**

Urban Future Global Conference (UFGC19): Urban Mobility, Green Business & Innovation, Leadership, Built Environment & Architecture. More Information: <<https://www.urban-future.org/>>