

**Formal and informal land and settlement development in
African cities: connections and conflicts. The cases of
Nigeria, Kenya, Tanzania and Botswana (sponsored by the
Lincoln Centre)**

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Sub-Saharan Africa is urbanising rapidly with suggestions that many cities will double in size over the next twenty years. This growth is taking place in a context of limited state resources to spend on urban infrastructure, limited urban tax revenue to contribute to the infrastructure demand, high levels of poverty and inequality, low formal job creation and under-capacitated local and national governments. Informal settlements as a form of shelter are the norm rather than the exception in many parts of the continent. A particularly serious concern is that planning and land management frameworks are inappropriate as tools to manage this rapid growth, leaving many African cities with severe urban land use institutional deficits including inappropriate concepts, legislation, norms and standards. Many African cities have a combination of 'modern' and traditional land tenure systems with these processes often working in

parallel with each other. And in addition the intensification of informal and unregulated property markets results in a widening gap between formal and informal sectors as well as growing conflicts between state and non-state actors. This round table will focus on the issue of land and planning conflicts in four major African cities. While the cities themselves (Lagos, Dar es Salaam, Nairobi and Gaborone), and these countries, are very different in many ways, there are significant commonalities in terms of relationships between formal and informal land processes, how the poor attempt to secure land, and how both the state and 'formal' private sector respond to this. At the same time there are new coping strategies, new collaborations and new 'ways of doing' in African cities that could suggest innovative ways forward in the future. The emphasis here is that rather than applying imported 'best practice' models from other parts of the world, many of which are inappropriate to the local context(s), it is important to document, assess and build on emerging and often hybrid approaches. The four papers will focus as follows: Prof Peter Ngau will share results of on-going applied research with Akiba Mashinani Trust. It revolves around improving access to justice in land tenure and basic services for the informal settlements in Nairobi - case study of Mukuru. From this study informality mirrors both the exclusion and coping strategies of the urban poor. The applied research explores options for civic and governmental collaboration to mainstream access to land tenure and basic services through negotiation, incremental upgrading and review of regulatory and financial frameworks. A/Prof Taibat Lawanson will share experiences from on-going research in Ibeju Lekki Lagos. The study revolves around the land acquisition process for mega-project development (Lekki Free Trade Zone) and the consequences on lives and livelihoods of inhabitants of the indigenous communities. The study also looks at the planning framework that governs megaproject development in Lagos. Professor Wilbard Kombe will critically reflect upon the urban land management trends in Dar es Salaam focusing on how the subsisting land tenure regimes influence the formal and informal settlements development patterns. The paper will examine the nature of linkages and cooperation between the formal and informal systems and argue for reconciliation of the two in a manner that improves the quality of outputs of the informal sector – so as to enhance inclusiveness, reduce urban divide and inequalities.

Professor Faustin Kalabamu will demonstrate that informal land deliveries are driven by complex and multi-layered factors rather than a single utilitarian goal of obtaining a place to sleep. Based on evidence and examples from Greater Gaborone, the paper shows that players and driving forces behind informal land delivery processes vary overtime and space in tune with changes in social, economic and political environments. It argues that while early invasions of state land in Gaborone was driven by the need for shelter by the poor, later informal land deals involved land owners, traditional chiefs, business communities and the elite motivated by economic considerations. Invariably, the latest informal land delivery processes in Greater Gaborone have pitted customary land owners against the state resulting in numerous litigations and commissions of inquiry.