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The politics of shelter: Understanding outcomes in three African cities

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Abstract

This paper analyses the politics of shelter provision in three African cities, focusing on the needs of and provision for the low- and middle-income residents. Housing is a priority for low- and middle-income households. Governments influence multiple facets of land and shelter and affect the shelter options realisable for urban residents. The significance of housing to citizen wellbeing means that housing policy and programming is attractive to politicians seeking popular support.

The framework of political settlements is used to structure the analysis. In all three cities, national political elites seek to influence housing outcomes. In the two capital cities, elites use clientelism (backed up by violence) to advantage themselves and secure rents for influential local groups (or factions). Territorial controls are used by elites to influence electoral outcomes, while approaches to housing help to gain legitimacy through strengthening paradigmatic ideas that encapsulate a vision for development.

To date, the framework has primarily been applied to the national level. Hence, this application is both novel and a test of the framework's relevance at this spatial scale and with this sectoral focus.

Keywords: shelter, African cities, sub-national political settlements

1: Introduction

This paper analyses the shelter[1] outcomes in three East African cities – Hawassa, Mogadishu, Nairobi – to understand more about the formal and informal political processes associated with those outcomes. The framework of political settlements is used to structure the analysis. This is introduced following a summary of the significance of shelter for development, and an elaboration of role of the state in shelter delivery.

About two-thirds of sub-Saharan Africa's urban population lives in slums (closely associated with informal settlements[2]), characterised by insecure tenure and inadequate access to essential services (UN-Habitat 2012). Housing is a significant priority for low- and middle-income residents and a very significant proportion of income is spent on housing. Housing determines access to a range of basic services, as well as providing safety and security and potentially enabling income generation. Government influences multiple aspects of housing availability and quality, including the availability of land for housing, both directly through zoning and indirectly through the expansion of roads and public transport. Governments regulate investment in basic infrastructure which affects the quality and cost of shelter; roads and other pathways must be installed and maintained, and energy, water, sanitation and waste management services are required. Governments may also provide direct support for housing (Satterthwaite and Mitlin 2014; CAHF 2019). And they influence the affordability of housing through standards such as plot sizes, and how and where they are enforced, and the cost of formal/informal/illegal procedures for getting permission to build or change the zoning. Hence an understanding of the politics of decision-making related to shelter is critical to addressing the lack of shelter provision.

The discussion in this paper uses the conceptual framework of political settlements to develop insights into the nature of shelter policies, programmes and practices. The political settlements framework helps us understand the behaviours of national political elites and developmental outcomes (Hickey, Sen and Bukenya 2015). With respect to the framework itself, this application at the city scale and for the shelter sector is an exploration of the relevance of this approach (Goodfellow 2018).

Section 2 introduces recent work on political settlements, drawing out key themes of relevance to the application of this framework in the urban context, including this sectoral and sub-national application. The political settlements framework considers if, when and how social order is established such that economic development can take place, with formal and informal institutions defining processes that enable elites to secure rents[3] and incentivising the avoidance of inter-elite contestation. The

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[1] 'Shelter is used to refer to the package of land, dwelling (or house) and basic services.

[2] Not all slums are informal settlements (as some are in formal areas). However, in this text, I avoid the term 'slums', due to its pejorative connotations (Gilbert 2007).

[3] Rent – in this context – refers to the acquisition of money, goods and/or services received by an individual as a result of government action (favourable decision, policy and/or programming introduction or amendment).

framework considers both elite bargains and the potential influence of non-elite groups. The paper, as explained in Section 3, which introduces the methodology, draws on research into the nature of housing markets, government shelter programmes and related trends in the three study cities. Section 4 introduces the three cities, summarising shelter provision and the prevailing national-level settlement. Section 5 elaborates on what we have learned about the ways in which politics affects shelter outcomes, and how, in turn, shelter influences national and city politics. Section 6 concludes.

The city studies provide evidence of the processes through which national and urban elites use clientelism, corruption and violence to advantage themselves in acquiring rents. In all three cities, national settlements are influential at the city scale. Elites seek to influence state investment in shelter such that their opportunities for future rents are improved. Shelter activities also respond to local non-elite groups (or factions) whose needs are deemed significant. In addition, elites seek to manage land or territories to influence future electoral outcomes, with consequences for the shelter sector. The vision (or paradigmatic ideas) held by politicians are significant in influencing state shelter policies, programmes and practices and help to establish elite legitimacy and popularity. The political settlements framework is helpful in drawing attention to the distribution of rents and the opportunities for the accumulation of assets, and the ways in which elites seek control over local outcomes. The focus on shelter highlights the consequences of elite contestation and position for sectoral outcomes.

2: Understanding political settlements

This section discusses the political settlements framework, explores relevant work to date and explores its potential relevance to an urban context. Clearly, there are alternative frameworks to understand political positions and outcomes in towns and cities, including a more general political economy approach (see, for example, Goldman 2011). In drawing on the political settlements framework, this paper is responding to a growing interest in the framework among urban scholars (Croese 2016; Gastrow 2020; Goodfellow 2018; Jackman 2017). This working paper does not attempt to compare the explanatory power of alternative frameworks; that is beyond its scope. Rather, it contributes to this emerging body of literature. In so doing, it highlights the potential of the framework for urban research and suggests what urban research might contribute to the development of the framework. In this final activity, it contributes to a broader body of framework testing and review.[4]

This section introduces the literature on political settlements in the urban context. The section begins with an introduction to the framework. The following three sub-sections discuss the use of the framework at the sub-national level, issues of urban violence and social order, and political inclusion.

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[4] See other working papers produced by the Effective States and Inclusive Development Research Centre (www.effective-states.org).

The framework of political settlements

'Political settlements' argues that it is the presence of a balance between competing political elites, with formal and informal institutions distributing resources in a way that is broadly commensurate with relative power in that society, that explains why comparative stability and social order have emerged in societies not considered to be experiencing open conflict or disorder (Kelsall 2018). Note that the term 'institutions' is used in a sociological sense (i.e. as formal and informal rules, norms and behaviours), not as agencies or organisations. Di John and Putzel (2009: 290) defines political settlements as 'historically specific bargains over institutions', while Khan (2017: 637) defines the settlement as 'the distribution of organizational power'. Khan (2017) recognises that organisations (groups of individuals working together in structured ways) influence and are influenced by institutions; and organisations and institutions influence the distribution of resources. Institutional change is influenced by changes in the distribution of power between organisations and by exogenous factors such as technological change (Khan 2017). Multiple sources of power, including access to economic resources, violence, identity politics, ideologies and ethnic affiliations, may be relevant (Behuria, Buur and Gray 2017). Hence the political settlement framework encourages researchers to look for moments of agreement (or alignment) and disagreement between elites that influence resource distribution and/or social order.

The framework places some emphasis on social order (lack of violence), such that activities take place under the rule of government, i.e. the ruling elite has enough power to resist challenges (Behuria et al. 2017). Hence it considers the means by which the ruling elite is powerful enough to be the government (and be recognised as such), governing with the agreement with those powerful enough to disrupt this process.

How explicit the agreement has to be is a subject of debate. Kelsall (2018: 663) elaborates a definition of political settlements that says it is '…an ongoing, conflict-ending agreement among powerful groups'. Khan (2018) argues that a settlement is an implicit agreement which may have explicit parts; his position is that it necessarily requires a complex and deeply embedded understanding between elites than it is possible to codify in any written document. I reproduce his text below, as it summarises debates within the definition and its operationalisation. Khan (2018: 671) argues that political settlements should be considered:

> 'as an 'interactive order' where an identifiable and fairly robust social order exists, but it is the outcome of many interactions between groups and *not* based on any agreement or pact that can be identified *ex ante*. The difference is important because the representation of political settlements as consciously planned institutional arrangements does not address some of the most profound questions at the heart of institutional analysis, namely what makes any institutions or agreements enforceable, or the commitments to adhere to them credible?' (Italics as in original.)

Regardless of whether the agreement (either in totality or in parts) is explicit, it is agreed that settlements engender stability, which improves economic performance and increases the resources available for distribution. However, critically different types of settlements are associated with different levels of economic success, as some institutions and institutional arrangements are predicted to favour economic development more than others (Khan 2018). Elites may agree settlements that do not maximise economic potential.

The popularity of the framework has risen, as development assistance agencies have acknowledged that politics and political relations influence development outcomes and have sought to work within that reality (Croese 2016, Khan 2017). Hickey (2013: 6) argues that the framework offers a historicised political economy approach that helps to elaborate the role that capitalism and politics play 'in shaping development processes and outcomes'.

Khan's work on political settlements has resulted in a fourfold typology of settlements: potential developmental coalitions; (vulnerable) authoritarian; (weak) dominant; and competitive clientelism (see Section 4). This typology emerges from two twofold distinctions. First, between dominant (authoritarian) and competitive (electoral) systems; or, if there is no electoral system, between a dictatorship and elites able to contest for the nation state. Second, between settlements characterised by strong factions (groups not part of the elite, but powerful enough to affect the stability of governments and so influence elites), or weak factions that are not powerful enough to influence elites. Strong excluded factions lead to discretionary decision-making through personal bargains (deals); while weak excluded factions enable the state to move towards the universally applied rule of law (rules). A settlement with a dominant elite and weak excluded factions leads to the 'potential development coalition'. A 'weak dominant' settlement has elite competition (constraining the ruling elite) with weak excluded factions not powerful enough to influence outcomes. A 'vulnerable authoritarian' is a governing elite that faces strong excluded factions (demands for at least some redistribution), but with relatively little elite competition. Finally, 'competitive clientelism' has strong excluded groups (pressing for redistribution) and competition within elites (leading to weak government and little law enforcement). Hence this framework implies that the best economic development outcomes are secured when there is little internal competition among elites and little external competition from factions pressing to influence elite bargains.

The possibility of sub-national settlements

The relevance of political settlements at the sub-national level (i.e. urban) is an ongoing debate (Berdegué, Escobal and Bebbington 2015, Hickey and Hossain 2019). Kelsall (2018) argues that political settlements should remain focused on the national scale and suggests there is a need to develop alternative conceptual frameworks to analyse rent allocations to lower levels. Hickey and Hossain (2019) suggest that sub-national settlements are distinct and develop the idea of a 'policy domain' to investigate how national settlements interact with political outcomes in specific social policy fields. They

suggest that our understanding of the politics of sub-national processes – specifically education – can be advanced through differentiating between *paradigmatic ideas* that offer a 'set of assumptions about the functioning of economic, social and political institutions' which belong to the national level, *problem definitions* that frame particular issues perceived as problematic, and *policy ideas* that provide solutions to significant problems (Schmidt in Hickey and Hossain 2019).

Both Goodfellow (2018) and Jackman (2017) recognise that the political settlement in the capital (or major) city may have more to do with the national settlement than city-specific politics. This significance is partly driven by the current and potential resources generated in major cities and their value for the political elite. The significance of urban land in national elite deal-making has been noted for Nairobi (Gulyani and Talukdar 2008, Manji 2015) and Luanda (Croese 2016). But the importance of these places goes beyond resources, with urban space being linked to representations of state power and demonstrations of state capability. Urban management in Kigali, for example, contributes to the national settlement through generating resources (real estate), ideational ambition (grandiose urban planning and iconic buildings), and exercising violence through evictions (potentially linked to the beautification of urban space) (Goodfellow 2014). The materiality of urban development and how development processes have associations with specific imaginaries has long been recognised to be significant in establishing the legitimacy of political elites (Côté-Roy and Moser 2019, Watson 2014). In addition to symbolising modernisation infrastructure, projects also benefit elites by being a lucrative source of income and opening new territories for further accumulation opportunities (Harvey 2012; Manji 2015). Urban management may further help ruling elites, by offering evidence of capability in state administration (Goodfellow 2014). And Goodfellow and Jackman (2020) recognise the significance of capital cities as a space in which elites can assert their authority in the face of public opposition (through both coercion and more positive engagements). The significance of urban politics to national settlements is also evidenced by elite responses to opposition control in major cities (LeVan and Olubowale 2014) with, for example, the suspension of democratically-elected authorities in Nairobi (Owuor 2009), Kampala (Gore and Muwanga 2014) and Zimbabwe (McGregor and Chatiza 2019).

Conflict, violence and social order

Considerable emphasis is given in the political settlements literature to violence, with an understanding that social order (and the ability of the state to have primary control over violence) is critical to development and economic growth. Whether explicit or not, key to the settlement is the ability to enforce 'peace' such that there is an acceptable level of political stability with an associated level of state administration. What is 'acceptable' is context specific; even states with a stable social order may have considerable levels of localised violence (Khan 2018, Pospisil and Rocha Menocal 2017) and there are different societal perspectives on unacceptable levels of violence. Jackman (2017) applies the political settlements framework to understand issues of social order and inclusive development in Dhaka and demonstrates how ongoing

violence and extortion are a means to enable social order with commensurate stability. Hence violence may be used to support settlements, just as settlements may be used to reduce violence.

The extent and specific nature of violence in cities has been widely researched, particularly in Latin America (Savage and Muggah 2012). Moser and McIlwaine (2014) argue that violence is manifest in multiple forms across towns and cities of the global South and is endemic to the current development model. As recognised by Jackman (2017), at least one source of structural violence is that related to political dominance and rule enforcement. Multiple catalysts for urban violence are elaborated by Jackman (2019), with some being coincidental (the capital city as the residence of political elites), some being related to the need for the state to demonstrate its capability to assert control, and some being a response to the ability of the political opposition to organise in larger urban centres. Savage and Muggah (2012) reference the historic significance of cities in state control over territories and the contribution of urban politics to elite strategies of dominance. A further dimension of violence is the urban context is that of citizen contestation and claim-making (Goodfellow and Jackman 2020, Harvey 2012, Mitlin 2018, Muggah 2014). Localised violence may be enabled by the state when local elites exploit neglected populations with the creation of 'no-go' low-income neighbourhoods (Muggah 2014 and/or where the state has abandoned residents and does not provide security (Kruijt and Koonings 2009).

Goodfellow and Jackman (2020) explore the use of violence in capital cities within dominant regimes (as elaborated within a political settlements framework). Capital cities and other major urban centres – they suggest – are territories in which elites may have to assert their authority if excluded elites build their opposition base there. The potential to do this is related to complex and frequent social interactions between opposition groups, and/or the strength of private enterprises, who may contest dominance if it is anti-capitalist, and/or the ability of citizens to push for basic services and civic capabilities. However, Goodfellow and Jackman (2020) also elaborate on the limitations of governing through coercion when they recognise that dominant governments may temper coercive (repressive) strategies with generative approaches that offer benefits to reduce support for political opposition and prevent strong factions from emerging.

Elite rule and urban contestation

The significance of politics in urban relations is longstanding and widely recognised. This may be, at least in part, related to the transition from a feudal to a mercantile and then to a capitalist economy with more open contestation about state policies that affect both growth and redistribution (Castells 1983). These groups include many civil society agencies, regional and city politicians pressing for inclusion (Satterthwaite and Mitlin 2014). While much research using the framework of political settlements has had a primary focus on established elites, Behuria et al. (2017) argue that the elite focus within political settlements analysis is misplaced. Groups outside of traditional elites may be powerful enough to secure inclusion (Khan 2018, Pospisil and Rocha Menocal

2017), and/or may influence elites such that they compromise and redistribute rents more evenly (Khan 2010, Tyce 2019).

Shelter is critical to wellbeing and is commodified in urban centres of the global South. Shelter is an all-encompassing good that includes tenure status, the dwelling and a range of basic services commonly associated with residency, such as access to water, energy and sanitation. The large numbers living in informal settlements in urban centres in the global South are due to the absence of effective state policy frameworks, and more deliberate state policies to generate rents. Section 4 discusses this further, in the context of the research locations. Shelter has been a source of considerable contestation, as communities have invaded land, fought evictions and lobbied for improvements (Lines and Makau 2017, Moser 2009, Perlman 2010, Satterthwaite and Mitlin 2014). Grassroots organising to demand justice and redistribution challenges elite deals and demands redistribution and/or the extension of rights and entitlements. Moreover, shelter (including services) has also been used as a tool to secure citizen support as elites trade redistribution for political advantage (Croese 2016, Gilbert 2002); and opposition movements may highlight shelter issues to motivate a political challenge to elites (McGregor and Chatiza 2019, Mitlin and Mogaladi 2013).

The following section summarises the methodology, prior to a summary of the findings in Section 4.

3: Methodology

Findings from the three cities were gathered within a DFID-funded research project (2017-19) to understand the present state of shelter provision and approaches to improve outcomes for low-income residents. The cities were selected to provide insights into more general challenges and opportunities associated with rapid urbanisation in the global South. DFID provided an initial list of locations in which the research could take place and the cities were selected from this list (Earle and Grant 2019). Both Nairobi and Mogadishu are capital cities, while Hawassa is a regional city growing rapidly after becoming the capital city of the Southern Nations and Nationalities People Region. In both Ethiopia and Kenya, there are established political settlements (respectively and tentatively dominant and competitive), which is not the case in Somalia. These locations provide a variety of significant dimensions in which to explore the political settlements framework in an urban setting. The set includes capital cities, but also a secondary city; it includes a variety of national settlement types, including no settlement; and, as elaborated in Section 4, in Nairobi, it includes a centre in which shelter has established significance in the political settlement. Moreover, Kenya is a country that has experienced substantive decentralisation, while Ethiopia is one in which there are considerable pressures to decentralise. Hawassa is the site of an industrial park and therefore is embedded within the Ethiopian government's developmental agenda, while also being located within a Region pressing for greater autonomy. These are diverse cases that enable an exploration of the political settlements framework.

The methodology is qualitative. The research team used standardised semi-structured schedules for individual interviews and focus group discussions. Interviewees were selected to inform researchers about private, public and citizen efforts to address housing needs and associated outcomes. Focus groups provide the perspectives of low-income residents. The team – combining experts based in the UK and in the African cities – developed an understanding of housing markets and the evolution of location-specific interventions to improve shelter outcomes. Levels of violence created a challenging context in Mogadishu. The study was undertaken by a research consultancy based in Denmark and Kenya with long-standing links in Somalia and experience of research in Mogadishu since 2012 (Bryld et al. 2019). International team members were only able to access selected settlements and government offices for short periods. Interviewees were frequently brought to a secure location for the interview. Somali team members had greater access and undertook the research in informal and formal neighbourhoods.

This paper draws on interviews and focus groups conducted by the team.[5] Findings have emerged through a multi-stage process. First, and prior to the development of the questionnaires, a research note introduced the concept of political settlements to researchers. Interview schedules were then developed through discussion across the team. Separate briefings were held with researchers in each city, to ensure that the questions were understood and to help with the identification of interviewees. All interview transcripts were then reviewed. An initial draft of the paper was shared with city-based and UK researchers and refined, following their inputs. The discussion has also been informed by my involvement in two earlier studies of shelter outcomes and government urban poverty programming in urban India and Uganda, supported by the DFID-funded research centre on Effective States and Inclusive Development (Burra et al. 2018; King and Kasaija 2018). The research has had a city focus, with limited interviewing of national government officials and politicians.

4: City studies

Nairobi [6]

Nairobi is a city of 4.4 million in 2018, and home to just under 10 percent of the Kenyan population. Kenya's urban centres are growing rapidly, with an annual population growth rate of 4.36 percent (2010-15) (UN-Population Division 2018). Economic growth in Kenya is currently estimated at 6 percent, relatively strong for sub-Saharan Africa.[7]

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[5] For Hawassa: 26 semi-structured key informant interviews, 120 semi-structured interviews with residents and 11 focus group discussions (Grant et al. 2020). For Mogadishu: 35 semi-structured key informant interviews and 63 semi-structured interviews with those living in informal settlements supported by focus group discussions (Bryld et al. 2019). For Nairobi: 72 qualitative interviews and 17 focus group discussions with low-income households, and 13 key informant interviews (Mwau, Sverdlik and Makau 2020).

[6] This section draws on Mwau, Sverdlik and Makau (2020).

[7] https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/press-release/2018/10/10/kenya-economy-poised-to-rebound-in-2018-and-remain-robust-through-2020 (accessed 28 May 2020).

The low-income rental market is dominant within shelter options, reflecting low wages, poverty and historical patterns of land development. An estimated half of Nairobi's population live in 'slums' on 2 percent of the land (Lines and Makau 2017); and over 90 percent of households rent (Gulyani, Talukdar and Bassett 2018). Very low wages mean that 69 percent of residents live in one room (typically ten square feet) (N12[8], KNBS 2016: 36). While the lowest income residents live in shacks at ground level, those slightly better off rent a room in a tenement between 8 and ten stories high; both have communal services. Thirty-six percent of informal settlement residents live in single-room tenement accommodation. These informal inner-city areas have very high densities exceeding 50,000 persons per hectare. Due to the high price of inner-city land, high- and middle-income households have bought land on the urban periphery to develop their own housing, and 50 percent of all new build falls into the category of self-organised dwellings. (N1[9]). Formal housing finance is limited, with just 26,187 mortgages (2017) (Central Bank of Kenya 2018, cited by Mwau et al. 2020: 37) and this reflects high levels of informal employment and a lack of affordability (Gardener et al. 2019).

Contested land ownership and traditional corrupt practices have led to frequent land grabs, with public land being captured by private individuals with the support of officials (Klopp 2000, Mwau and Sverdlik 2019). Tenement blocks are partially regularised, with, for example, developers constructing police stations that are then staffed by police officers and with buildings clearly contravening planning regulations (Mitlin 2018); while they contravene many regulations, they are not controlled by officials (Mwau, Sverdlik and Makau 2020). More generally, the scale of violence and contestation related to land acquisition in Kenya, and the highly politicised nature of land allocations, have been recognised (Klopp and Lumumba 2017); as has pervasive corruption (Bassett 2019) and the difficulty of land reform (Boone et al. 2019). Bassett (2019) notes that the decentralisation processes instigated by the 2010 constitutional reform introduced a new body to manage land (the National Land Commission) and potential reforms to urban development procedures. However, she argues (page 1168) that:

> 'Kenya's faltering land reform is a result of the internal conflicts of land actors and that no legal institutional reform will be sufficient to alter entrenched behaviour without renewed pressure from a broad-based land justice/human rights movement demanding real change.'

Historically, informal institutions have conferred advantageous land allocations to specific ethnic groups (Bassett 2019, Kloop 2008).

Government has done relatively little to address housing need. Decentralisation in 2010 led to responsibilities being devolved to local authorities, who have worked with utilities to extend services into informal settlements (D'Arcy and Cornell 2016), but only

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[8] Planning consultant (formerly senior staff member in local authority), Nairobi, 9 May 2018.
[9] Academic and practising architect, Nairobi, 25 April 2018.

6 percent of county budgets are spent servicing urban areas (N9[10]). Nairobi County has 17,000 residential units, which are in poor condition, as they have not been maintained (N7[11]). From 2013 to 2017, national government expenditure on housing more than doubled, from Ksh. 6.1bn to Ksh. 16.5bn (US$ 59m to USD 162m) (KNBS 2018a: 178, quoted in Mwau et al. 2020: 23) but this is tiny in comparison to need. Recent government initiatives to upgrade public housing in neighbourhoods such as Eastlands and to construct dwellings, target housing in central areas and may exacerbate the shelter problems faced by low-income residents if they lead to displacement (Mwau et al. 2020). In 2017, the president unexpectedly announced that affordable housing would be one of his four 'pillars', with a promised 500,000 dwellings.

Wanyama and McCord (2017) and Tyce (2019) agree that the current settlement is one of competitive clientelism, having shifted to this from a more authoritarian past. Tyce (2019) acknowledges that competitive clientelism is unfavourable to economic growth, due to the short-termism of political decision-making, but argues there is sectoral exceptionalism in Kenya, with politicians being persuaded to take a more long-term view in specific sectors. The government of Kibaki (2002-2013) recognised the importance of urbanisation within Vision 2030 (2006-07) (N8[12]), and there has been considerable infrastructure investment in Nairobi.

Although not analysed through the framework of political settlements, the significance of the urban context for deal-making and political dominance has been recognised. President Moi granted land to key political allies to maintain his position in power and these elites have sought access to land to secure financial advantage (Gulyani and Talukdar 2008, Klopp 2000). Efforts at rent acquisition have resulted in a distinctive form of tenure, which has an unprecedented scale in Nairobi. Landowners sub-let their land to other individuals (structure owners), who build shacks to rent. State-led infrastructure investments have offered further opportunities for elite rent acquisition (Manji 2012, 2015). Elites continue to invest in real estate development (Pitcher 2017). Unequal access to land has been contested by civil society organisations (Klopp 2000, Lines and Makau 2017). The Nairobi Regeneration Project (N5[13]) and Nairobi County's declaration of a Special Planning Area (SPA) in Mukuru follow years of civil society campaigning (Lines and Makau 2017).[14]

Mogadishu[15]

Mogadishu's population is currently estimated at 1.8 million (2015), having grown rapidly in recent years due to insecurity; Somalia's annual urban growth rate is estimated at 4.8 percent (2010-15) (UN-Population Division 2018), with Mogadishu's

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[10] National government official with urban development responsibilities, Nairobi, 2 May 2018.
[11] Consultant in land and housing with major company, Nairobi, 11 May 2018.
[12] Senior national government official with planning responsibilities, Nairobi, 30 April 2018.
[13] Real estate consultant, Nairobi, 3 May 2018.
[14] Work on the SPA in Mukuru has demonstrated to Nairobi that the County did not have the instruments required for informal settlement upgrading. Jack Makau Presentation to the Hallsworth Conference on Scaling up Participatory Development, 11-13 June 2019.
[15] This section draws on Kamau et al. (2019), and Bryld et al. (2019).

growth rate guesstimated at 6.9 percent.[16] Widespread insecurity has led to large numbers of internally displaced people (IDPs); in 2014, 33.4 percent of Benadir Region's population (of which Mogadishu is capital) were considered displaced. M23[17] estimated there are between 0.5 million to 1 million IDPs in the city. Despite the establishment of an internationally recognised federal government in 2012,[18] the situation remains insecure, with clan militia and the al-Shabaab terrorist group challenging the current elite. Annual economic growth in Somalia remains weak, at 2-3 percent.[19] Since the collapse of the Siad Barre government in 1991, clans have competed for power across Somalia. The federal government is unable to assert its authority, tackle al-Shabaab and secure a political settlement. Clan-based competition over land remains a critical trigger for conflict. Many neighbourhoods in Mogadishu remain unsafe (M9[20],M2[21]).

IDP settlements are also home to low-income Mogadishuites who cannot afford alternatives. These residents live in extremely poor, over-crowded conditions, with insecurity and forced evictions (M2[22], M21[23]). Families can only afford a shack made from mud, sticks and cloth (without services) (M13[24]). Land prices have risen as much as ten-fold since 2012, due to the housing needs of IDPs, returnees (as a result of greater security) and staff of international development assistance agencies (Willenburg, quoted in Kamau et al. 2019). Land issues are politicised, and land ownership is contested. Evictions are frequent; for example, on 29-30 December 2018 40,000 people were displaced in one large eviction by private landlords (M6[25]). Recent evictions appear to target newly settled IDPs from non-majority clans. Higher-income households with residency in Mogadishu can undertake bank transactions and settle freely around the city. However, only 15 per- cent of the Somali population have commercial bank accounts and there are few formal options to access housing finance.

Gatekeepers or informal settlement managers (ISMs) make money by 'taxing' IDPs in return for the provision of safe shelter (IAAAP 2018). An estimated 140 ISMs are responsible for resolving local disputes and ensuring the smooth running of resettlement camps. They are either self-appointed or appointed by the IDP/informal settlement residents' community; the community typically selects an existing leader who has been present in the settlement for a long time and who is well-connected and trusted. It is widely acknowledged that ISMs are controlled by elders or customary elites. Camps may be deliberately placed in neighbourhoods to stimulate economic

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[16]   http://amisom-au.org/2016/01/somalia-second-on-demographias-ranking-of-fastest-growing-cities-in-the-world/ (accessed 28 May 2020).

[17] International refugee organisation, local staff, Mogadishu, 14 March 2018.

[18]   https://peacemaker.un.org/document-search?keys=&field_padate_value%5Bvalue%5D%5Bdate%5D=&field_pacountry_tid=Somalia (accessed 28 May 2020).

[19] https://www.worldbank.org/en/country/somalia/overview (accessed 28 May 2020).

[20] Investment manager with international bank, Mogadishu, 19 April 2018.

[21] Senior official, private utility provider, Mogadishu, 20 July 2018.

[22] Senior official, private utility provider, Mogadishu, 20 July 2018.

[23] Senior staff member, private bank, Mogadishu, 13 March 2018.

[24] Senior official, regional administration, with planning expertise, Mogadishu, 14 March 2018.

[25] Discussion with operational staff of two donor agencies, Mogadishu, 14 March 2018.

growth and support business development; however, only temporary structures are permitted and, as the land rises in value, IDPs are evicted.

Low-income IDPs are constrained in their housing options, as they are unable to move around the city unless sanctioned by clan leaders. Securing a Mogadishu identity card requires a guarantor, i.e. a local resident willing to vouch for the individual, and IDPs rarely acquire this status. Dominant clan leaders appear reluctant to expand residency in Mogadishu, fearing this will reduce their control over the city. The same rationale appears to underpin the lack of formal recognition for ISMs. Clan leaders have the power to approve requests by outsiders to acquire and/or settle in neighbourhoods. Bryld et al. (2019: 16) summarise a situation in which elite interests exploit vulnerable populations thus:

> 'an unholy alliance between different actors in Mogadishu, which ensures that the IDP classification remains – and that IDPs remain largely in the informal IDP settlements in the outskirts of the city;'

this is to ensure that the humanitarian assistance keeps flowing, with positive impacts on high-end residential demand for rental dwellings and employment for NGO staff. As significantly, the continued use of the IDP classification and the camps keeps these residents out of the city; Bryld et al. (2019: 16) explain that 'accepting IDPs as full residents of Mogadishu would interfere with the clan balance in the city, compromising the power balance of some actors'.

Interviewees agreed that land and housing are one of the most profitable businesses in Mogadishu, with all major business elites involved in this trade (M14[26]). Formally, land and property are governed through three overlapping jurisdictions: customary law, formal courts and sharia law. However, minority clans choose not to use these formal processes, as these are dominated by majority clans and favourable outcomes are unlikely. Many residents choose neighbourhoods dominated by their own clan group, for security reasons.

State land within the current city boundaries has been 'grabbed' by powerful clans, and the government is struggling to control development. The Benadir Regional Administration (BRA) is now seeking to expand Mogadishu to obtain the land needed for public services and the permanent resettlement of IDPs. The BRA finally launched its IDP policy in January 2019; this aspires to provide a framework for lasting solutions for the city's displaced populations, recognises the rights of all Mogadishu's residents, and achieves the former mayor's goal of having no IDPs in the city by 2022. However, faced with past hostility, state incapacity and the powerful clan leaders preventing improvements in informal settlements, informal residents mistrust the government and are not optimistic about their future options (M8[27]).

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[26] Discussion with independent real estate dealers, Mogadishu, 10 April 2018.
[27] Senior public notary, Mogadishu, 19 April 2018.

Hawassa[28]

Hawassa was a relatively small town until 1992, when its future was transformed. It was designed as the regional capital of the newly formed Southern Nations and Nationalities Region. Growth has intensified following the construction of an industrial park, completed in 2016. The federal government developed the park to increase clothing exports and generate jobs (primarily for women) (World Bank 2018), thereby reducing dependence on aid and strengthening national sovereignty. [29] Tens of thousands of migrants, mainly young women, have been drawn to the city and the population has increased from 36,000 in 1984 to about 350,000. Ethiopia's annual economic growth has averaged 9.9 percent in the last decade.[30] In a referendum in November 2019, local people voted overwhelmingly for a new region for the Sidama ethnic group.

Migrants have been accommodated through the development and expansion of informal settlements on the urban periphery. The expansion of the city's boundaries – done for political reasons (see below) – may have exacerbated the growth in informal land transactions (Kinfu et al. 2019: 79). In the absence of state provision for housing, famers have sub-divided land and sold plots to individuals. To assist with upgrading, city authorities have regularised 17,000 plots, but many remain informal. The government has promised infrastructure investment in these areas, but officials are reluctant to install networked services in neighbourhoods which may need to be re-planned.

Middle-income households – and would-be home-owners – struggle to access affordable land. This is consistent with earlier findings (Kinfu et al. 2019). The price of leasehold land for housing construction has reached 18,000 ETB (US $ 600) per square metre. Consequently, middle-income households have sought to access land by buying shacks or dilapidated dwellings on farmland and redeveloping these property (H30[31]). Mortgage finance is not available, as the sole provider in the country, the Construction and Business Bank, has stopped issuing loans, due to the fear of borrower default.

The housing crisis is widely acknowledged. The government has sought to expand housing for low-income workers at the industrial park through the provision of rental rooms on individual plots in informal settlements (World Bank 2018). However, this provision is considered expensive by potential residents [32] and supply remains

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[28] This section draws on Grant et al. (2019) and Grant et al. (2020).
[29] https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2017/dec/05/ethiopia-industrial-park-government-investment-boost-economy-low-wages (accessed 28 May 2020).
[30] https://www.worldbank.org/en/country/ethiopia/overview (accessed 28 May 2020).
[31] Focus group with residents, Hawassa, 16 April.
[32] One woman elaborated on the affordability of these rooms: workers earn 1,200 Birr each month, and the cost of a room is 1,000 Birr a month. This interviewee shares with his/her room with three others. Focus group discussion with female industrial park employees, Hawassa 17 April 2018.

inadequate.[33] While workers at the industrial park are protected, other tenants are vulnerable to rent increases (H29[34]). To address the need for housing for industrial park workers, the government introduced the Sidama Microfinance Institution (Sidama MFI) in 2017. To date, this has supported the construction of 536 housing units, each with a capacity to host four workers (Grant et al. 2020). Participating landowners receive design services, free technical support and loans; tenants have to work at the industrial park.

More generally, city and regional governments struggle to acquire and service residential land in the context of rapid urbanisation and limited financial resources and capacity. Efforts to provide land to housing cooperatives have been poor (H7[35]). With limited land availability, Hawassa's Masterplan makes multi-storey buildings mandatory for new government offices and housing cooperatives. Incremental housing development is permitted if the provision is kept to a standard structure, is single storey and within the compound of an existing house. The federal government's Integrated Housing Development Programme has provided 3,538 apartments to households in Hawassa. The federal government has also financed cooperative housing for extremely low-income families and infrastructure upgrades to older government housing, but this investment is insufficient. Poor state capacity and inadequate technical support has constrained delivery. A new project is to provide 35,000 dormitory beds for workers in the industrial park through a public private partnership financed by concessional debt and equity from investors (World Bank 2018).

There is an ongoing tension between the municipality and the federal government, particularly the Industrial Parks Development Corporation, with respect to housing. The municipality is keen for the park to be integrated into the town, while the Corporation wants housing closer to the site. Corporation staff argue that the municipality has done little to address their housing need. Corporation staff are struggling to demonstrate the success of the parks and their profitability for inward investors. Underlying this tension is a struggle for control of land exacerbated by ethnic sensitivities. The Corporation has plans to expand all the parks (at least in theory) and while land administration is a regional responsibility, the federal government have over-ridden this in the past. Pressures for greater autonomy in Sidama have weakened the authority of the federal government, while making the local elites concerned about the dilution of ethnic voting as a result of in-migration related to park employment.

Ethiopia is considered to have a dominant political settlement (Goodfellow 2018, Lavers 2019) with the centralisation of power in a single national political party. However, excluded groups are powerful enough to secure some level of redistribution (Goodfellow 2018, Lavers 2019). The government's priority was rural development (Lavers 2019), but from 2005 there has been a growing recognition of the significance of urban development. Economic growth in Addis Ababa and other urban centres has

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[33] While 12,000 basic corrugated iron shacks houses are planned, only 33 have been constructed. Housing expert, regional government, Hawassa, 7 March 2018.

[34] Officer in faith-based organisation, Hawassa, 6 April 2018.

[35] Regional administration, official, specialist in urban development. Hawassa, 7 March 2018.

been encouraged – and funded – by the government, to placate citizens pushing for new and better development opportunities (Goodfellow 2018). Urban protests, such as the food riots in 2001 and 2005, and the electoral success of the opposition in Addis Ababa, have resulted in federal funding for urban employment and housing plus an urban social protection programme, livelihood training and loan capital for micro-enterprises (Lavers 2019). One explicit policy objective is to encourage the growth of small towns and prevent migration to the larger cities (Lavers 2019). To support this, the federal government is making land available for urban-based economic activities and shelter-related needs, including housing. There is specific encouragement for small and medium-sized construction enterprises that provide jobs for young people in urban areas (Grant et al. 2020).

The Ethiopian government has reached out to civil society in their efforts to manage political opposition. In Hawassa, there have been efforts to incorporate civil society, but these organisations are weak. They have done little to secure new options and civil society groups are considered to be controlled by the city authorities (Grant et al. 2019).

Hawassa has been affected by national politics. Kinfu et al. (2019) describe how the strong showing of the opposition in Ethiopia's urban centres in 2005 led to the government expanding urban boundaries to change the voting constituency in order to favour the ruling party. This growth in the municipal area was designed to protect the rural land designation because of an agreement reached between administrations; only 41 percent of the land within Hawassa's boundary is demarcated as urban land. Grant et al. (2020) note that this also enabled a growth in administrative posts, and for those posts to be filled with people from the Sidama ethnic group, who could also benefit from access to political appointments. However, as the regional interests have become stronger and more confident, there may now be concerns from the Sidama ethnic group with respect to migrants who are coming from outside the region to work in the industrial park.[36] These migrants are selected based on an ethnic quota system and hence they are diversifying the ethnic mix in the population.

Continuing ethnic conflicts in Hawassa highlight the challenge the federal government faces in maintaining its position, and the difficulties facing urban authorities have been exacerbated by Sidama nationalists and their goal of regional status for Sidama.[37]

5: Political relations and shelter outcomes

Section 5 juxtaposes the findings of the research with discussions in the political settlements literature. It has a primary focus on institutions, social relations and associated outcomes. I give attention to these findings, rather than the reflections and speculations of interviewees on political agreements, informal coalitions and how interests might be served. This is – in part – for methodological reasons, as different

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[36] Thanks to Thomas Lavers for this insight.
[37] https://www.ethiopia-insight.com/2019/05/05/sidama-declares-state-of-impatience/. (accessed 18 May 2020).

teams were involved in the three studies, with different levels of access, and different levels of experience in interviewing around politically sensitive themes. However, this approach has the advantage of avoiding speculative accounts of exchanges internal to political elites.

The discussion is organised around core themes that are highlighted by the political settlements framework and which resonated with findings: how elites benefit from housing delivery; the use of clientelism and violence to secure support and control opposition; and how shelter and housing may legitimate states and their actions. The final sub-section below discusses the significance of city politics for national elites and specifically considers the role of sub-national actions to support national-level settlements.

Rents and asset acquisition

With respect to rent extraction and accumulation, land-based activities (including housing) are significant for elites, particularly in the two capital cities. In both Nairobi and Mogadishu, high-income citizens undertake housing investment to secure assets and generate income (M21[38], N1[39], N10[40]). For elites in Mogadishu, land ownership confers social status, generates rental income and, in the context of inflation and insecurity, offers a relatively safe form of savings (M9[41], M14[42], M21[43], M2[44]). The dominance of clan-based interests has led to the government evicting IDPs, reallocating land to elites, and failing to enforce court-ordered evictions against clan leaders and warlords (M8[45]). Well-placed groups have ensured the continuation of IDP settlements in specific neighbourhoods to benefit from resource flows; that is, household's tenure insecurity is perpetuated because of the opportunities for rent acquisition.

In Nairobi, land has long been a significant source of rents and political patronage (Gulyani and Talukdar 2008; Klopp 2000). As Mwau et al. (2020: 28) summarise: '"Land was used as a tool to control the city politics". KII, Nairobi County Government'. Moreover, findings suggest that national elites have an interest in land development; and there are multiple substantive efforts to acquire income, such as, for example, the development of tenements in the context of a market demand for better quality accommodation by slightly higher income households (Huchzermeyer 2007, Maina and Mwau 2019). The profitability of tenement development is considerable, with a payback period of less than four years (Mitlin 2018); low-income housing appears to be more profitable than higher income housing (Mwau et al. 2020).

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[38] 'The privileged group are the wealthy people … there's no regulations limiting the number of plots people can buy or own' (senior staff member, private bank, Mogadishu, 13 March 2018).
[39] Academic and practising architect, Nairobi, 25 May 2018.
[40] National government official (office) with urban development responsibilities, Nairobi, 24 April 2018.
[41] Investment manager with international bank, Mogadishu, 19 April 2018.
[42] Discussion with independent real estate dealers, Mogadishu, 10 April 2018.
[43] Senior staff member, private bank, Mogadishu, 13 March 2018.
[44] Senior official with private utility provider, Mogadishu, 20 July 2018.
[45] Senior public notary, Mogadishu, 19 April 2018.

The emphasis within the political settlements framework on clientelist institutions for rent acquisition resonates with research findings in all three cities. In Nairobi, for example, over 30 documents are required for buildings approval and this creates opportunities for corrupt practices (N1[46]). 'In Nairobi everything is a cartel. Most of these cartels control housing and provision of services like water (N9[47])' (see also Lines and Makau 2017). The lack of regulation in low-income rental markets appears to be a deliberate strategy to enable exploitation (Mwau and Sverdlik 2019). The anti-poor consequences of such arrangements are highlighted; for example, in Hawassa: 'There was partiality [in housing allocations] – people who had money and power were using it. … after houses were built in the name of the poor, they were given to rich.' (H27).[48] Despite a developmental state in Ethiopia stating its interest in the common good in land dealings, multiple interviewees argued that land-based development is associated with corruption and elite benefits (Grant et al. 2019).

The findings suggest that much of the rent acquisition involves lower-level officials or locally well-placed individuals. It does not all involve the national political elite. In Hawassa, reference is made to the historic conditions under which the Ethiopian government, in 1975, took control of urban land to prevent exploitation (Grant et al. 2019). In Hawassa, a secondary city, interviewees suggest that it is local elites that benefit from shelter-related state investment (H39).[49] In Nairobi, both national and local elites benefit from rent capture. For example, in Mathare, one of the larger informal settlements in Nairobi;

> "'[C]ommunity leaders operate as a cartel manipulating every local administration that comes in. Although chiefs are changed regularly, the village elders rarely change. The power they have on issues of the villages have enabled them to manipulate every new chief who comes around; hence, protecting and retaining their interests." (KII with Kiamutisya Resident)' (Mwau 2020: 7).

Nairobi findings also highlight the importance of housing transfers to securing political support from middle-income groups (Mwau 2020), and low-income organised communities (Lines and Makau 2017). This suggests – at least in Nairobi – that non-elite factions are important in influencing policies, programmes and practices in the shelter sector.

In Hawassa, Grant et al. (2020) report that interviewees believe that land policies have been deliberately constructed to favour elites, facilitated by an 'abundance of competing and at times conflicting legislation at different levels' (page 22). Land is seen as critical to improved shelter outcomes, but land is unavailable for the municipality. Land auctions have been halted, both because of with uncertainties about

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[46] Academic and practising architect, Nairobi, 25 April 2018.
[47] National government official with urban development responsibilities, Nairobi, 2 May 2018.
[48] Participant in focus group of female residents in Leku Kebele, Hawassa. 16 April 2018.
[49] Broker, Hawassa, 1 May 2018.

the status of the region of Sidama and while awaiting a new national land policy; however, some elite investors are still able to access land (Grant et al. 2020). Low- and middle-income residents struggle to secure tenure, and low levels of compensation offered to farmers making land available mean that they prefer to develop housing informally (Grant et al. 2020). Grant et al. (2020: 28) share the perception of urban residents that:

> 'the allocation of housing is a deeply political enterprise for government, and that housing policy might be seen as first and foremost a vehicle for political co-option'.

Urban transition with pressure for modernisation is evident in all three contexts. However, the implied change in rent distribution is less clear. In Mogadishu, interviewees differed in their assessment of the pace of change. M14[50] and M16[51] argue that land transactions and development are increasingly market-based, with a diminishing role for clans (M16[52]), while M9[53] and M13[54] emphasise the continuing significance of clans. Bryld et al. (2019) argue that pressures towards formalisation within the shelter sector will challenge current clientelist outcomes and suggest that the introduction of competition in basic services such as electricity offers the potential for price reductions. Formalising land regularisation will 'shake up the political settlements' (Bryld et al. 2019: 39). However, they also point to the potential for intra-elite conflicts (ibid.). In Mogadishu, the rents gained from controlling land are politically significant (although there is little political stability). As the regional authority (BRA) intensifies its efforts to manage IDP settlements and challenge clan controls, tensions are emerging. It is not possible to determine if the efforts by BRA are about changing the settlement, or about changing the dominant group within the settlement. Nor is it clear that they will be successful in their efforts (Bryld et al. 2019). In Hawassa, interviewees also highlight a modernist advance, including, for example, challenges to clientelist politics, but they also suggest that progress is inadequate (H1[55], H27[56], H29[57]).

Recent state action to evict owners who have formally developed land illegally in Nairobi suggests that clientelist arrangements are increasingly under strain in Kenya's present political settlement.[58] Kenya's land and housing policy and legal framework have undergone significant changes with the 2010 Constitution, which necessitated

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[50] Discussion with independent real estate dealers, Mogadishu, 10 April 2018.

[51] Regional administration, official, with responsibility for humanitarian activities, Mogadishu, 29 May 2018.

[52] Regional administration, official, with responsibility for humanitarian activities, Mogadishu, 29 May 2018.

[53] Investment manager with international bank, Mogadishu, 19 April 2018.

[54] Senior official, regional administration, with planning expertise, Mogadishu 14 March 2018.

[55] Senior official, regional administration, Hawassa 6 March 2018.

[56] Focus group female residents, Leku kebele, Hawassa, 16 April 2018.

[57] Faith-based civil society organization, officer, Hawassa, 6 April 2018.

[58] https://www.nation.co.ke/news/Evictions-to-continue--Sonko-warns-city-land-grabbers/1056-4686548-y36ffc/index.html (accessed 14 December 2019).

legislative reforms in various sectors, including land. However, reforms are not consistently applied: 'delays … continue to compound the problems and … continue to benefit a few actors profiteering from the current dysfunctional system' (N8).[59] This pessimistic assessment is consistent with Bassett's (2019) earlier study on urban land reform in Kenya, which noted limited state capacity to manage reform processes and the scale of vested interests. 'The Kenya case, in short, provides a cautionary tale to land reformers, showing how difficult it can be to dislodge entrenched interests and promote social justice through formal institutional change' (page 1179). She (Bassett 2019) recognises that commercial developers – as others – are ambivalent about institutional reform. Commercial developers gain if building approvals are quicker and less costly, but they will lose the ability to buy favours; and even informal dwellers may be disadvantaged, as more rigorous enforcement of rules leads to evictions. Our findings do, however, highlight that informal residents are organising to secure protection from the abuse of power. Organised citizens have secured the demonstrated willingness of Nairobi County to support upgrading in Mukuru (also see Lines and Makau 2017). This reflects both the pressure from the landless for more inclusive policies, and recognition of the earnings of the informal cartels in Nairobi's informal neighbourhoods and a desire by the County to capture this income for the public purse.[60]

These findings highlight the tension between modernist aspirations and lived realities and suggest some sources of pressure for reform (although reform coalitions appear weak). They also highlight the significance of urban areas as a source of rents for political elites, and the contested nature of these processes as communities resist the everyday realities of this exploitation. These findings demonstrate both the difficulties in challenging entrenched interests, but also the dynamic nature of urban centres, as political positions and alliances coalesce around positions that are tested, and then amended. As illustrated in Nairobi, policies are in flux and the interests of multiple groups are partially realised, as various competing factions struggle for dominance.

Violence, social order and political advantage

Violence is present in each city and is associated with the establishment and maintenance of the settlement and social order, i.e. these are political settlements that are managed by violence. Types of violence include terrorist activities by non-state armed actors and political violence to assert elite authority to secure rents.

In all three cities, rent acquisition is enforced by violence. In Nairobi[61] N8 described how someone was 'shot dead in gangland style', due to land conflict, while interviewees refer to elites and criminals working together in informal land development (N8[62], N4[63]). In Nairobi, violence is a means to enforce exploitative shelter provision. The extraordinarily exploitative conditions faced by those living in informal settlements

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[59] Senior national government official with planning responsibilities, Nairobi, 30 April 2018.
[60] Personal communication, senior NGO manager, Nairobi, 24 October 2019.
[61] Senior national government official with planning responsibilities, Nairobi, 30 April 2018.
[62] Senior national government official with planning responsibilities, Nairobi, 30 April 2018.
[63] County government, planning professional, 5 October 2018.

are associated with high levels of police brutality (Kimari 2019); which may reflect police frustration with criminality and criminal infiltration of the force, but which are surely also a product of deeper structural issues and the willingness of the state to use violence.[64] Politically-related violence is recognised, with elites deliberately targeting opposition neighbourhoods in Nairobi during the post-election violence of 2017 (Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch 2017). Mwau et al. (2020) note that Kenyan politicians have mobilised young people using ethnic loyalties to challenge electoral outcomes. Violence appears to be connected to processes to secure incomes (land-based 'rents' and/or criminal activities), ethnic-based loyalties that can be territorially reinforced, and political power through control of electoral constituencies (see also Elfversson and Höglund 2019). More positively, the decentralisation process within the 2010 constitution is understood as a strategy to reduce ethnic tensions and violence,[65] and reflects the elites stepping back from open conflict with an alternative strategy to share resources, i.e. It is potentially a new settlement requiring lower levels of violence to maintain (see also D'Arcy and Cornell 2016).

Violent conflict in Somalia has led to major state functions – i.e. recording land ownership in Mogadishu – being conducted outside of established legal frameworks and judicial agencies.[66] Clan leaders control land occupation, the location of camps, the acquisition for residency (or not) for IDPs and determine a minimal role for local government. Clan preparation for a democratic transition and electoral contestation includes preventing the spatial mobility of IDPs and denying residency to IDPs in Mogadishu. This is a way to control territory, and the ISMs play a critical role in managing residents' frustrations as efforts to address the needs of IDPs are contested (Bryld et al. 2019). In the short term, and paradoxically, improved security in the city may increase IDP vulnerability, as wealthier people reclaim properties and new property development leads to evictions (M8[67], M3[68]).

Hawassa lies within a region seeking a greater degree of ethnic-based autonomy, and Sidama's nationalists' ambitions to be a regional state have led to violent street clashes and deaths.[69] This has direct negative impacts on shelter, as violence deters workers from finding lower-cost accommodation in the smaller towns around Hawassa (H35[70]). As noted in Section 4, the federal government had expanded the boundaries of the city to incorporate new voters (supposedly loyal Sidama people) in its efforts to ensure political dominance (Kinfu et al. 2019). Arguably this strategy has not worked, with the rise of Sidama nationalism and violent protests in the city (Grant et al. 2020). While

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[64] https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2019/aug/06/if-we-dont-kill-these-people-they-will-kill-you-policing-africas-largest-slum (accessed 28 May 2020).

[65] Personal communication, NGO programme manager with grassroots expertise, Manchester, UK, 27 October 2019.

[66] Local researchers were told that interviewing related to this issue would be risky and should not be attempted.

[67] Senior public notary, Mogadishu, 19 April 2018.

[68] Very senior official, regional administration, Mogadishu ,14 March 2018.

[69] https://www.crisisgroup.org/africa/horn-africa/ethiopia/b146-time-ethiopia-bargain-sidama-over-statehood (accessed 28 May 2020).

[70] Sub-city manager, Hawassa, 17 April 2018.

civil society in Hawassa is weak, Earle and Grant (2019: 6) suggest that citizen mobilisation is considered a threat: '[M]unicipal government may choose not to act against illegal developments if it suspects that evicting residents could provoke conflict (an increasing risk in Hawassa over the last year)'.

Violence emerges as a strategy to enforce settlements, just as it is a strategy to contest settlements, and our findings are consistent with Jackman (2017). In Nairobi, state violence may in part be a response to the scale of social movement activities and citizen protest to challenge outcomes, stop evictions and secure support for informal settlement upgrading (Lines and Makau 2017).[71] State agencies are seeking to manage citizen protests against labour force exploitation with inadequate government investment in the social wage. In all three locations, state violence is related to competing ethnic-based interests. In both Hawassa and Mogadishu, ethnicity is one reason for local violence, as urban locations are caught up in national-level struggles for dominance. In Mogadishu, this seems closely associated with control of urban land. In Hawassa, ethnic-related violence is related to struggles for autonomy and regional decentralisation.

Urban land is significance in securing political dominance (regardless of its role in asset accumulation and rent-seeking). In both Hawassa and Mogadishu, electorates have been altered to influence election outcomes. In Hawassa, this has been affected by changing city boundaries to influence the ethnic composition of the electorate, and in Mogadishu by limiting the spatial mobility of certain population groups. In analysing the significance of land to political settlements, it seems important to differentiate income flows (rents) from territorial control (votes).

The significance of imagery and vision

Political control requires more than coercion and/or rents. Imaginaries and visions for city (and national) development appear significant to justify specific programmes and differential outcomes for social groups, and to build support for political elites. Ideas of modernisation and the transformation of ideas, materialities and relationalities permeate the perspectives of interviewees. Goodfellow and Jackman (2020) recognise the contribution of 'legitimising discourses' to strengthening the organisational power of the political elite and they identify three such discourses: developmentalism, populism and securitisation. Our findings fit within and extend their argument. First, we find that the theme of modernisation, one aspect of developmentalism, is significant in legitimating ruling elites. Second, ideas or legitimating discourses have a material representation through infrastructure and the built environment.

Modernisation and planning are contrasted to informal practices by interviewees and reference was made to new initiatives, such as Nairobi master plan,[72] preparations for

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[71] See efforts of social movements to secure more inclusive options. https://www.muungano.net/browseblogs/2018/8/9/the-protest-the-representatives-and-the-petition (accessed 19 September 2019).

[72] The Railway City Plan, Embakasi Station Masterplan, Nairobi Expressway are indicative of the state's ambitions for a re-imaged 'modern city'.

the structural plan in Hawassa and preparations for a city plan in Mogadishu. This was seen in normative terms: for example, 'The way of living in the past was not good' (H27[73]). While modernisation was mentioned in the context of Mogadishu, imageries and positive visions appear less significant than in the other two cities, with violence being a more significant source of control and authority.

Imaginaries of modernisation are diverse and four specific dimensions emerge. One set is associated with 'good' government, such as smart cities. A second set is associated with the nature of infrastructure and services: modernity expressed through multi-lane roads, bus-rapid-transit, iconic buildings, symbolic sculptures, and beautification. A third is associated with urban citizenry: volunteers producing clean healthy neighbourhoods, formally employed workers, and home-makers in modern housing. Finally, this is a set specifically related to the built environment and housing style, with modernity expressed through terraced housing, ground plus five or six (walk-ups) and high-rise buildings.

Interviewees referenced rural development as a government priority (N9[74], M23[75] and M16[76]) to explain why urban development has been neglected and the potential for urban economic growth and broader goals of developmental transformation now being recognised. In Hawassa, for example, the industrial park is associated by the government with the opportunity to develop an exemplar city [77] meeting citizen aspirations. Two interviewees elaborate:

> 'What kind of a sub-city do we like to see? Concerning our vision there is a national vision and our vision emanates from that and hence our vision is that we want this sub-city to become comfortable, green and peaceful environment for its residents, in which the residents peacefully work and live happy life (H6[78]).

> ' … we want to see it developed and become prosperous and convenient for living, just like other developed cities in the developed counties. Based on this, we want to see it has basic infrastructures like roads, water and other like telephones and become full-fledged in all aspects' (H35[79]).

Negative aspects of modernisation are recognised. Interviewees were concerned about exclusion and/or desirable but unachievable goals (due to low wages and the

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[73] Focus group female residents, Leku kebele, Hawassa, 16 April 2018.
[74] National government official with urban development responsibilities, Nairobi, 2 May 2018.
[75] International refugee organisation, local staff, Mogadishu, 14 March 2018.
[76] Regional administration, official, with responsibility for humanitarian activities, Mogadishu, 29 May 2018.
[77] https://www.eib.org/en/press/all/2016-212-european-investment-bank-president-pledges-support-for-jobs-compact-in-ethiopia-tackling-migration-and-refugee-challenge.htm (accessed 28 May 2020).
[78] Municipal official, Hawassa, 5 March 2018.
[79] Sub-city managers, Hawassa, 17 April 2018.

poor quality of basic services and housing) (H6[80], H39[81]). But, despite such concerns, Grant et al. (2020) draw on interviewee insights to argue in favour of stronger forms of public management for improved shelter delivery (page 8). Resolving competing visions of an urban future between capitalists, modernisers, clan leaders (in Mogadishu, M11[82], M12[83]) and other political elites is considered key to securing improved shelter outcomes (M10[84], M11, M14[85], MP21; N7[86], N10[87]).

The contested set of paradigmatic visions for city governance is particularly evident in Nairobi.[88] Here, interviewees acknowledged the significance of modernity, with reference to Dubai and Singapore as exemplar models (N6[89], N10[90]). More inclusive approaches were also referenced, with the example of informal settlement upgrading. The county government has legal provision to declare a Special Planning Area, which enables the introduction of more flexible standards. This provision is currently being used – in a process of experimentation and co-production with a social movement called the Muungano Alliance – in Mukuru, a centrally located informal settlement with 100,000 households (Lines and Makau 2017, Mwau et al. 2020). The potential of government to influence the ways in which citizens organise has long been recognised (Castells 1983, Harvey 2012). However, positive responses to citizen demands for inclusive approaches and coproduction are tempered by state evictions of residents to enable infrastructure investments and secure modernisation.[91]

Underlying tensions also emerge in Hawassa, although they are less public than in Nairobi. The city authorities see their interests as best served by the integration of the industrial park, while the federal government is more concerned about the success (profitability) of the park *per se.*

Is there a city and/or housing settlement?

Can a city-based settlement be distinguished from the national political settlement, i.e. is the distribution of rents between organisations at the local level distinctive from that at the national level, or is this dominated by the national political settlement (Kelsall 2018, Khan 2018)? And if there is an alternative set of political relations related to rents and associated institutions, is this substantive enough to be a settlement?

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[80] Municipal official, Hawassa, 5 March 2018.
[81] Resident in formal settlement, Hawassa, 16 May 2018.
[82] Very senior official, international bank, Mogadishu, 19 April 2018.
[83] Informal settlement managers, focus group, Mogadishu, 3 September 2018.
[84] Investment officer with international bank, Mogadishu, 19 April 2018.
[85] Discussion with independent real estate dealers, Mogadishu, 10 April 2018.
[86] Consultant in land and housing with major company.
[87] National government official (office) with urban development responsibilities, Nairobi, 24 April 2018.
[88] They are also recognised, but to a lesser extent in Hawassa. See interview with officer in faith-based organisation, Hawassa, 6 April 2018.
[89] Business analyst, Cooperative Society, Nairobi, 31 May 2018.
[90] National government official (office) with urban development responsibilities, Nairobi, 24 April 2018.
[91] https://www.theguardian.com/cities/2018/aug/20/it-will-not-benefit-us-we-dont-have-cars-nairobi-kibera-community-cleared-road (accessed 28 May 2020).

The significance of the city to national politics was evident in Nairobi in the 1980s, when democratic city government was suspended by national government, at least in part to generate rents for national elites.[92] Present indications include the negotiations between the Presidential Office and Nairobi County with respect to the new national housing programme (affordable housing being included within the Big Four), real estate development in the city (Pitcher 2017) and interviewees' references to the involvement of national elites in tenement development.[93] Tax concessions for developers constructing over 400 dwellings are an example of the formal advantages introduced by the government (Mwau et al. 2020).

In Somalia, while informal powerbrokers in the city are manoeuvring to strengthen their claims over future resources, the relationship between political elites in Mogadishu and Somalia is unclear. M11[94] argues that land is significant for national elites (although not always a priority). Hawassa is a smaller city, whose growth has been influenced by the developmental state ideology of the federal government. While the political settlement in Ethiopia considers the federal government to be a 'dominant' power, recent levels of contestation – such as that in and around Hawassa – raise questions about the government's ability to impose its will, regulate conflict and deliver the development aspirations related to Hawassa's industrial park. Such contestation is driven by regional interests, rather than an opposition attempt to secure national dominance; at least in this region, the political settlement is under threat from below.

The significance of national interests in shelter is evident. It is demonstrated through tensions as city authorities challenge national interventions in territories that they see as their responsibility. In Hawassa, the municipal authorities are seeking to integrate the industrial park within their own planning and development process, while the industrial park management is more responsive to the national agenda, which gives primacy to the profitability of activities within the park. Tensions are also evident in Nairobi, where the county officials seek to work with, but also be autonomous from, the national government;[95] and in Mogadishu, where the regional authority (BRA) is struggling to assert its plans in the face of land grabbing by powerful clans (despite a constitution that states this land is owned by the government). The significance is strongly associated with land and housing development as a focus for profitable business activity and the importance of land as a key source of rents. The significance of infrastructure investment for rent-seeking and elite benefit is also recognised. The willingness of the nation states to intervene in city politics points to the ways in which city settlements – even if they occur – are subordinate to national settlements.

However, what is also evident is that sub-national pressures remain strong in both Ethiopia (with the national government struggling to maintain its hegemony) and Kenya (where the constitution recognises the significance of local elites). Moreover,

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[92] https://www.nation.co.ke/news/1056-375412-l7whwnz/index.html (accessed 19 December 2019).
[93] Not attributed, due to a reluctance of interviewees to go on record.
[94] Very senior official at international bank, Mogadishu, 19 April 2018.
[95] Jack Makau, SDI-Kenya, personal communication, 26 November 2019.

interviewees in Nairobi also reference exploitative processes at the neighbourhood level, with benefits to local elites; and contestation between government agencies:

> '[c]ity planning authorities may reject approvals for housing construction (e.g. where title deeds are lacking), but another state agency (e.g. the provincial administration like the area chief) can aid the construction of the same building by issuing a "form of approval" that sits outside the formal planning and building regulations – this is common practice in informal settlements' Mwau et al. 2020: 25).

The connection of this to national settlements remains unclear.

6: Conclusion

This paper uses the framework of political settlements to analyse the housing outcomes in three East African cities (Hawassa, Mogadishu, Nairobi). The contribution of political settlements – it is argued – lies in making the outcomes of complex political relations legible through suggesting lines of enquiry (Behuria et al. 2017). Within political settlements literature, typologised relations between elites are associated with outcomes that have different implications for inclusion and growth. Our analysis did not restrict itself to explicit agreements between competing elites in the context of housing delivery, and in this respect our use of the concept is more consistent with Khan (2017) than Kelsall (2018). Our findings suggest that informal agreements are more evident that formal agreements in all locations.

Findings highlight the significance of shelter for rents secured by national elites. Elites use violence to establish dominance, acquire rents and influence shelter-related investments to improve future rent-seeking opportunities. Patterns of land and shelter accumulation, the distribution of rents and the institutions managing those processes appear to be part of the national settlement in Hawassa and Nairobi and contested non-settlement in Mogadishu. The vertical links that we have identified include the capture and control of resources by the ruling power to distribute and secure support (all three cities), control over spatial areas, to enable them to extract their own rents and/or assert control (Nairobi, Mogadishu), measures to enable rents for local elites that are not part of the national settlement (Hawassa, Nairobi) and targeted shelter investments for low-income groups (Hawassa, Nairobi).

Land is important for incomes (or rents) and for the management of urban electorates and hence advantage in elections through territorial control. This is evident in the limitations on citizenship facing IDPs in Mogadishu, with associated controls on their freedom of movement, in the use of ethnic-based violence to influence electoral constituencies (Nairobi) and in the expansion of the boundaries of Hawassa to dilute opposition influence (Hawassa).

Visions of a modern urban future (in competition with loyalty to a rural legacy) emerge as significant in understanding state efforts to establish their legitimacy and win popular

support. Housing and infrastructure investments reinforce positive modernist imageries (Hawassa, Nairobi). Ideas and imageries emerge as important, because of the legitimacy they offer elites. This resonates with Lavers' (2019) analysis of the significance of 'paradigmatic ideas' underpinning the political settlement in Ethiopia. In Mogadishu, only the idea of 'modern' government emerges (albeit ineffectually), but in the other two cities there is an ebb and flow between ideas, programmes and shelter outcomes. Ideas may also be important because of their influence on material transformation, with consequences for relations between organised citizens and political elites. The nature of shelter, cooperative or individualised, may in the longer term affect organising potential (Mitlin 2018). Hence the shelter sector is significant in terms of rents secured by national political elites (and hence the ability to secure and maintain a ruling group or coalition), in securing territorial control, and in mobilising popular support, with the last two measures contributing to electoral advantage.

In all three cities, elites are having their power tested, and (actual and potential) political action by non-elite groups is influencing shelter outcomes. In terms of shifts to more inclusive housing options, this is strongest in Nairobi, where new citizen expectations and their mobilised groups are requiring state agencies to change strategies as they seek to maintain their position in the face of pressures from 'below'. The use of violence is tempered by more positive strategies; hence the significance of the 'vision' for a better urban future. In Nairobi, both the county and national governments are responding to citizen protest and other pressures. Here, there has been a significant extension of citizen rights to those living in informal settlements, with a switch in emphasis from eviction to upgrading. The 2010 constitution responds to the demands of local elites and potentially gives citizens more influence. In Hawassa, the lack of willingness to respond to citizen frustration over regional autonomy has led to insecurity compounding problems of the non-delivery of shelter. There are specific measures to address the needs of specific groups of citizens, such as efforts to provide housing to the workers in the industrial park. While organised civil society is weak, local government's reluctance to use evictions highlights the significance of potential mobilisations as an influence on state action And there are efforts to include a wider group of stakeholders in planning at the national level, albeit with little evidence of this changing programming in Hawassa. In Mogadishu, while there are measures to address shelter needs, these appear to be in paper only, with no evident state capability to translate commitments to action. Urban land is contested by competing clan-based groups.

The national political settlement appears to be significant in all three locations. State investments in the shelter sector appear to be made for immediate rent-seeking objectives and to secure electoral support, rather than for economic growth. The ability of the state to address housing needs is weakest in Mogadishu. The motivation to secure electoral power – and manage land accordingly – also shows that shelter policies and programmes cannot be either understood or designed without reference to the wider political context. Opportunities appear most favourable in Nairobi, where non-elites (both low-income and middle-income groups) have some influence over the redistribution of resources.

Going forward, this research suggests some key questions to understand more about the politics of shelter provision. What, if any, is the relationship between local-level rents and the resources secured by national elites? Given that national political elites are significant in all three urban centres, how important is the contribution of the shelter sector to the national settlement? Given that elites appear to manipulate urban territories (and/or population movements) to secure electoral advantage in all three centres, what does this tell us about strategies in different settlement types? How do specific shelter options, such as informal settlement upgrading and/or the provision of new build, affect political loyalties and/or grassroots campaigning? What are the political implications of collective (cooperative) and/or individualised responses to housing need, in terms of both support for national elites and engagement with local-level state officials? How can a new generation of shelter options be effective in securing inclusive urban development, and safe and secure cities?

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