Chapter 5
Urban Governance and the Political Economy of Livelihoods and Poverty in Harare, Zimbabwe

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Abstract This chapter examines the interface between urban governance and poverty, using the case study of Harare, Zimbabwe. The chapter focuses on the following specific urban policy areas that impact directly on the urban poor: access to land, mechanisms for citizen participation and voice, attitude towards the informal sector, attitude towards informal housing and regulatory environment. The chapter argues that urban governance (laws, policies and administrative practices) either positively or negatively impact the lives and livelihoods of the poor. Overall, the urban governance frameworks of Harare remain largely 'poor-unfriendly'. The urban development aspirations, such as the drive towards a 'world-class city' are at variance with the livelihoods of thousands of the urban poor, the majority of whom engage in informal street trading. In Harare, the urban poor have vulnerable tenure insecurities, which exposes them to evictions and displacements, disrupting their livelihoods. The urban poor in Harare is also alienated from decision-making processes such as budget formulation. Without an active voice in urban governance, the needs of the poor in Harare remain marginal. Urban governance frameworks in Harare need to be rethought, so that they become responsive to the needs of the poor, especially those living and working on the 'urban margins'.

Keywords Harare · Urban poverty · Urban governance · Urban policy

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5.1 Introduction

Urban poverty and governance are now at the centre of international development policy and agenda. With the rapid population of the urban poor now living in cities, poverty can no longer be regarded as a rural phenomenon (Haddad et al. 1999; Satterthwaite 1997). Therefore, there is increased attention from researchers and policymakers on issues of urban poverty (Devas 2005). There is also widespread recognition of the interface between poverty and governance at all levels (UNDP 2000; World Bank 2000, 2003). The structures and processes of urban governance, including policies, laws and administrative practices, have significant implications on how urban poverty is produced and addressed. In the case of urban governance, the debate about structural reform has tended to focus on technical issues of planning, infrastructure development and service delivery (Devas 2005). However, there are important issues about the impact of the local political economy on those living in poverty, and how political processes may include or exclude the urban poor. For instance, while Zimbabwe made progress in improving the general standard of living, many urban dwellers still live under poor conditions characterised by extreme poverty and socio-economic marginalisation. The provision of goods and services by urban councils is ineffective and inefficient due to bad urban governance (Chekai 2020).

Past studies in this area have tended to focus on the nature of poverty and livelihoods of the poor (Beall 1997; Moser 1998; Rakodi 1995), or on urban development and urban management (Devas and Rakodi 1993). The question guiding this chapter is: How does governance affect urban poverty? The chapter examines how the organisations, mechanisms and institutions of urban governance impact on poverty, deprivation and inequality, based on insights from Harare, the capital of Zimbabwe. The chapter focuses on specific policies that affect the urban poor, including attitudes towards the informal sector, attitudes towards informal housing, regulatory environment, mechanisms for citizen participation and voice and access to land. The chapter draws largely on the analysis of secondary data sources, including peer-reviewed papers, policy reports from the city of Harare, newspaper articles and other relevant material.

The chapter is structured as follows: The chapter starts with an overview of the conceptual framework guiding the analysis and focuses on the key concepts such as urban governance and urban poverty. The chapter then provides a brief overview of the context of the study, highlighting factors shaping Harare's urbanisation, urban economy and overall urban development. This is followed by a detailed discussion on the specific policies that affect the urban poor in Harare, focusing on the regulatory environment (Sect. 5.4.3), access to land (Sect. 5.4.1), attitudes towards the informal sector (Sect. 5.4.4), attitudes towards informal housing (Sect. 5.4.5) and mechanisms for citizen participation and voice (Sect. 5.4.2).

5.2 Conceptual Framework

The term 'governance' is broad, often involving different perspectives such as the relationships between the state, citizens and civil society (Kihato 2011). Governance is about relationships between the state and civil society, rulers and the ruled, government and the governed; it is about the way the power structures of the day and civil society interrelate to produce a civic public realm (Swilling 1997). Obeng-Odoom (2012) underscored that there are three perspectives through governance: governance as a broader concept than government, governance as a set of rules and processes, and governance as an analytical framework**.** Governance also comprises the mechanisms, processes and institutions through which citizens and groups articulate their interests, exercise their legal rights, meet their obligations and mediate their differences (Resnick 2014).

Much of the writing on the concept of urban governance has focused on empirical case studies that have led to the exploration of outcomes of different institutional arrangements for the characteristics of cities (Melo and Baiocchi 2006: 587–588). Aspects of such literature have either emphasised a neoliberal model of urban governance (Guarneros-Meza and Geddes 2010), used various theories of power to analyse the behaviour of actors in urban governance (for example, Lindell 2008; Nicholls 2005), or focused on the factors and forces that inhibit urban governance in practice (Beumont and Nicholls 2008). Devas (2001) conceptualised city governance as a process involving the interaction between different actors and institutions in shaping what happens in cities. These different actors include businesses, both corporate and informal; civil society, including community organisations, non-governmental organisations, political organisations, religious groups. Thus, urban governance deals with power relationships between these different actors. These power dynamics determine the extent to which certain groups of stakeholders can influence the urban policy agenda. For example, the actions of institutions of city governance can either enhance or constrain the ability of the urban poor to pursue their livelihoods.

As a political and economic concept, urban governance is supposed to go beyond the state–market framework and produce outcomes that meet the needs of urban citizens (Obeng-Odoom 2013). Processes and institutions of urban governance have very tangible implications for everyday urban life (Muyeba 2019). Devas (2001) highlighted three critical factors, which determine the extent to which the urban poor can influence decision-making processes at the local level, namely: inclusive political processes, enabling the voice of the poor to be heard and to have influence; the capacity of city governance institutions to respond to the needs of the poor; and the role of civil society in enabling the poor to exert influence and achieve access and benefits. Inclusive and participatory governance contributes to poverty reduction by focusing on the needs of the poor (Mitlin 2004). The currency of inclusive governance is driven by several factors, chief among them civil society, government policies such as decentralisation, and the desire to pursue legitimate politics. Inclusive urban governance emphasises governance arrangements that promote the inclusion of the people, in particular the poor and marginalised. Inclusive urban governance

"emphasises the need to introduce mechanisms to encourage the involvement of those who do not find it easy to participate in state structures and processes because they are generally far removed from their own cultures and practices" (Mitlin 2004: 4). Inclusive governance is anchored on new structures and processes of engagement which are friendly, and specific to the needs of the poor. Smith (2004) pointed to the potency of processes leading to inclusive governance and the role of weaker groups in negotiating and fighting for transfer of power in urban management. Inclusive urban governance is closely related to citizen participation and civil society engagement.

The literature on citizen's participation is diverse, with Cornwall (2004) pointing to 'invited spaces' of participation with questions about who is invited, for what reasons, by whom and how, as key. Principally, this leads to inclusion as well as exclusion of some stakeholders (Muchadenyika 2015). There are different participatory mechanisms which enable choices to be considered by those affected, and which give the poor influence over decisions affecting them. In Johannesburg, South Africa, the preparation of local integrated development plans has involved extensive citizen participation. In Colombo, Sri Lanka, through community development councils, poor communities were able to influence local community action plans. In some Brazilian cities, participatory budgeting has opened up opportunities for the poor, and those hitherto excluded, to influence budgetary choices (Souza 2000). In Cebu City in the Philippines, there are a variety of forums in which citizens, community organisations and non-governmental organisations participate to address particular issues. Yet, as with any participatory mechanism, there are risks that the loudest voices carry the day, that minority views are marginalised and that large sections of the poor, especially the poorest, are effectively excluded. Shand (2018) argued that inclusive governance requires the creation of spaces where the views of low-income communities can be heard through deliberative problem-solving.

The ability of the urban poor to influence the agenda of city governments depends on how strong the civil society in that local context is. However, Devas (2001) argued that the interests of corporate business society are at variance with the interests and needs of the urban poor. For example, business corporates may prohibit informal traders from operating from certain spaces, especially where public space has been privatised. In Cebu City, the city government managed to negotiate with the formal business sector for a 'maximum tolerance policy' towards street vendors; however, with limited success. Informal business organisations can also influence urban governance. Devas (2001) also discussed the role that community-based organisations play in urban governance. Through community-based organisations, the urban poor can negotiate for improvements in infrastructure and services.

The growth of civil society organisations in many parts of the world has provided opportunities for the voice of the poor. But there are huge obstacles such as lack of resources of the poor, conflicting interests within and between poor groups, and lack of accountability of the leadership of community organisations to members (Mitlin 2004). Many civil society organisations primarily represent the interests of those who are better off, while non-governmental organisations often have interests that are at variance with the people they claim to represent. Recent global trends of democratisation and decentralisation have opened political space at the local level

in many countries. Whether or not the poor can make use of that space depends on two things: first, the institutional arrangements through which the poor can make their voice heard, and second, the ability of the poor to organise themselves to exert influence. There is, of course, no necessary correlation between either of these and the size and structure of city government (Devas 2005). Urban governance also impacts the livelihoods of the urban poor.

A livelihood comprises the capabilities, assets and activities required for a means of living. The urban poor adopt a range of livelihood strategies to survive, cope with impoverishment and reduce their insecurity (Rakodi 2001). In addition, they seek to improve their social well-being, provide themselves with secure and adequate living accommodation and exert their political rights (Rakodi 2001). The urban poor are therefore not only concerned with income poverty, but also with other aspects of deprivation. The traditional approach of governments to the problems of poverty and deprivation has been a 'top-down' approach, whether reliant on the 'trickle–down' of increased incomes resulting from economic growth, positive redistributive policies, attempts to alleviate poverty or the direct provision of infrastructure and services. What is of interest is the interaction between these formal attempts to alleviate poverty at city level and the efforts of deprived or excluded groups to gain access to resources and decision-making structures (Rakodi 2001).

The approach adopted in this chapter goes beyond focusing on the incidence of income poverty or household coping strategies to examine ways in which poor groups influence decisions and the agendas of government institutions. Important here are debates about representation and accountability, in particular the extent to which local democratic political systems provide opportunities for poor people to influence the urban policy agenda, and the role of civil society organisations in directly providing services, representing poor residents or ensuring accountability.

5.3 Context of the Study

Harare is the national capital of Zimbabwe. It serves as the main political and administrative centre for the country. The city was originally established by the British colonial authorities in 1890 and it was then known as Fort Salisbury. The term 'fort' was borrowed from the concept of fortified cities and towns in Medieval Europe whose design was mostly influenced by the need to protect citizens from potentially hostile neighbours. During the colonial period, European modernist planning approaches of order, aesthetics and economic efficiency guided urban development, while urban informality was not tolerated under these strict planning regulations (Matamanda 2020). The end of the colonial era also brought with it the end of segregationist policies which had been used to restrict the movement of indigenous people to urban areas. The removal of these restrictions gave rise to extensive rural–urban migration. Harare experienced rapid urbanisation from the 1980s onwards, leading to a large deficit in affordable housing and associated services (Muchadenyika et al. 2019). The drastic decline in the capacity of the national government and the City

of Harare to deliver low-income housing in the post-2000 socio-economic crisis, left the urban poor even more vulnerable. As such, there was a large and growing demand for housing against a critically constrained supply, which led to a dramatic increase in self-help initiatives (Muchadenyika et al. 2019).

Harare's urban economy has also become highly informalised. Since 2000, the political economy of Harare changed. Following the collapse of urban services, mass impoverishment, deindustrialisation and hyperinflation, the city failed to sustain its growing population (Alexander and McGregor 2013). Informal economic activities, especially street trading, has recently expanded (Njaya 2014). The expansion occurred in a range of different forms of informal retail, including mobile, stationary, fixed and itinerant vendors; in addition, organised car boot sales were a growing phenomenon (Njaya 2014). The statistics from the City of Harare show that there are approximately 30,000 registered vendors in the city; yet, in 2017, at least 100,000 vendors were operating in Harare, while approximately 20,000 were vending in the central business district (Matamanda et al 2020). By mid-2018, there were numerous abortive attempts by both government and the Harare City Council to remove the illegal street vendors through the conventional method of forcible eviction. The illegal street vendors resisted every attempt to remove them from the streets, reasoning that they had no other alternative to survive (Ndawana 2018).

In terms of housing, Harare has a huge backlog. The housing crisis in the city has resulted in the urban poor resorting to self-help approaches by building their own settlements. Most of these settlements developed without proper planning and lacked adequate infrastructure and services such as water and sanitation. Currently, Harare has over 63 informal settlements scattered around the city. Examples of the largest informal settlements in Harare include Hopley, Epworth, Hatcliffe Extension and Caledonia. These settlements also developed without institutions serving them, and their connection to the city is often contested.

5.4 Specific Policies Affecting the Urban Poor in Harare

This section examines the impact of specific policy areas on the urban poor in Harare. The areas examined include access to urban land for the poor, mechanisms for citizen participation and voice, regulatory environment, attitudes towards the informal sector and towards informal housing.

5.4.1 Access to Urban Land for the Poor

In urban areas, access to land is an important policy area that has implications for the poor, not just for housing but also for the livelihood opportunities which land offers. In Harare, there are cases that demonstrate that the land management processes

are 'poor-unfriendly'. The urban poor, especially those living in informal settlements, have precarious land tenure insecurity, which restricts their ability to invest in key infrastructure and housing improvements. State allocations of urban land and housing to the urban poor ceased to be made based on need via housing 'waiting lists'. Rather, party political interests came to predominate in processes of distribution that worked both through state institutions, and outside them, directly via the party structures. State institutions themselves were securitised and subject to political capture (McGregor 2013; McGregor and Chatiza 2019). The ruling elites in Harare control and dominate the land allocation and management processes in the city's largest informal settlements, making land a political resource that can only be accessed by those connected to patronage systems (McGregor and Chatiza 2020). Additionally, the system of 'waiting lists' is viewed by the City of Harare as a management tool and the most equitable way to allocate urban land. However, it is overly bureaucratic and marginalises the urban poor and new immigrants into the city, especially those who often do not have the requisite documentation or information to enlist (Chitekwe-Biti 2009).

Using the case study of Hopley, Matamanda (2020) underscored that despite having been allocated plots in 2005, the residents lacked entitlement to their plots. The lack of entitlement to plots through the absence of title deeds, even for residents who were allocated plots by the City of Harare, is an indication of the strategy of politicians to alienate the residents of Hopley and make sure that they have no claim to the land (Matamanda 2020). The lack of entitlement to the land means that residents cannot invest in housing improvements and most of them continue to live in substandard housing.

5.4.2 Mechanisms for Citizen Participation and Voice in Harare

Harare uses representative democracy, where residents elect councillors whose duty it is to champion the interests of their local communities. In each ward, there are ward development committees whose purpose is to bring people together and discuss issues of community development. The Harare Residents Trust and the Combined Harare Residents Association are citizen-driven associations whose mandate is to engage the City of Harare and influence urban governance, to ensure that the needs of residents are considered in urban planning and development. Street traders in Harare have also mobilised themselves and formed associations such as the Vendors Initiative for Socio-Economic Transformation. This association acts as a platform for street vendors to advocate for urban governance reforms. Despite the existence of these mechanisms and platforms, the voice of the urban poor remains marginalised. For example, street vendors continue to be alienated in decision-making processes on the production and reproduction of urban spaces. Street vendors in Harare are not consulted on relocation schemes and urban regeneration projects. The efforts of

these groups to express their concerns through popular protests are always thwarted by coercive municipal responses. Decisions on the siting and development of marketplaces have a direct impact on the livelihoods of street vendors, but they are always absent from the negotiating table. These decisions are made by technical experts using top-down approaches.

There are some positive developments related to the ability of civil society to influence the agenda of urban policy in Harare. For example, under the Harare Slum Upgrading project (2010–2016), the Zimbabwe Homeless People's Federation, with technical support from the Dialogue on Shelter Trust, signed a memorandum of understanding with the City of Harare (Muchadenyika 2015). The alliance between the Federation and Dialogue on Shelter is the largest social movement in Zimbabwe advocating for housing access to the urban poor. Through intense negotiations with local government, the alliance has managed complex relationships, built a collective coherent voice across its membership, built and manages alliances with other organisations working towards the same goals and constructively engages with the government on a set of very tangible outcomes (Chitekwe-Biti 2009). The Harare Slum Upgrading project created platforms for representatives of the urban poor to engage the urban policymakers on issues of housing and infrastructure development in underserved communities. However, the majority of the residents of informal settlements in Harare still lack formal, direct and sustainable relations with local authority structures (Chatiza 2019). While they vote for councillors in elections administered by national institutions, most of them do not have financial, technical and broader service delivery links with their councils. For instance, regardless of Hopley's proximity to established settlements, the community remains isolated and disconnected from the formal system that serves most parts of Harare (Matamanda 2020). This limits the opportunities for residents of such settlements to participate in decision-making processes that have a direct impact on their lives and livelihoods. Informal settlement residents have limited opportunities to participate in budget consultation processes, without which their ability to influence the agenda of local governments is limited. Therefore, the needs of informal settlements are not captured within municipal budgets.

5.4.3 Regulatory Environment

A particular obstacle in addressing the needs of the poor is the regulatory environment within which city governments are operating. Harare, for example, has inherited a collection of repressive by-laws and planning and building standards, which are not suitable for the needs of the poor. The events on the ground in the central business district of Harare raised questions concerning the legitimacy of Statutory Instrument 159, as there have been numerous occasions where blitz actions were undertaken to clear street vendors in the city, even from sites once designated by the City of Harare for such purposes (Bandauko and Mandisvika 2015). Dorman (2016) argued that the colonial era by-laws, plans and statutes remained essentially unchanged. The

informal sector in the city of Harare has remained stunted by the operative institutions that have failed to reform for the integration of the informal sector. The informal sector has therefore remained disenfranchised for their rights to the city because they have not been given the chance to access space in the city centre because of the operating legislative instruments that continued to marginalise activities of the informal sector.

5.4.4 Attitudes Towards the Informal Sector

The second aspect is the city's approach towards informal sector businesses, in which the tensions between the demands of formal (taxpaying) and informal enterprises, and between the desires of politicians and professionals for an orderly city, and the behaviour of informal businesses competing for locations and customers, are evident. Experiences from Harare demonstrate that targeted actions to support informal entrepreneurs such as street traders are not on the agenda of urban policymakers (Rogerson 2016). The City's plans, policies and programmes do not always provide for the integration of the informal sector. Therefore, people who operate within the informal sector have continued to do, without formal recognition from the institutions of urban governance. The informal sector in Harare continues to operate on the margins of the urban economy. In fact, "the contemporary directions of policy responses occurring in Harare suggest an unpromising future for their city's informal entrepreneurs" (Rogerson 2016: 229). The responses of the City of Harare to informality vacillate between actions of frontal aggression and of unleashing bouts of forced evictions to repressive tolerance within which formalisation is increasingly promoted as a means of extracting revenue flows from already economically hard-pressed informal entrepreneurs. The City of Harare has on many occasions demolished market stalls and other vending sites on the basis that they have been established illegally; thereby contributing to the loss of livelihoods and economic opportunities.

5.4.5 Attitudes Towards Informal Housing

Informal housing in Harare is widespread in peri-urban areas, such as Stoneridge, Hopley, Saturday Retreat, Odar Farm, and Hatcliffe Extension. About 35 farms were incorporated into the City of Harare boundary through Statutory Instrument 41 of 1996. Hopley consists of about 7,200 officially allocated lots. The City of Harare's initial intention was to plan, service and install infrastructure services before allocation. However, this process did not come to fruition. In Harare, there are areas of informal housing which the city authorities refuse to recognise, and hence provide even the most basic services such as water. Similar issues arise concerning the recognition of informal settlements. Official urban development programmes tend to ignore informal settlements which have significant problems over land rights. Residents of

informal settlements in Harare have a history of evictions with the government and city councils failing to adopt inclusive and sustainable solutions (Muchadenyika 2015).

5.5 Discussion and Implications

This chapter has examined the impact of urban governance on livelihoods and poverty in Harare, Zimbabwe. The chapter analysed how specific policies affect the urban poor in the city, focusing on access to land, mechanisms for citizen participation and voice, regulatory environment, attitudes towards the informal sector and informal housing. Devas (2001) argued that for urban governance to meet the needs of the urban poor, requires a system in which their votes count. There also needs to be a pro-poor municipal government that can deliver, as well as a dynamic civil society that can work towards an accountable relationship with the state. The situation in Harare represents the exact opposite of what Devas (2001) conceptualised as pro-poor urban governance. Instead, the urban poor, especially those living in informal settlements, are detached from the formal urban governance systems (see Chatiza 2019). The unequal development that exists in Harare is a direct result of marginalisation of the urban poor where the development landscape is dominated by prioritising the needs of the few elites.

Though residents of poor neighbourhoods elect their local councillors every five years, their representation in municipal policy structures is not effective. Thus, their needs and aspirations do not always feature on the agenda of urban policy in Harare. In most cases, the elected officials do not advance the interests of the urban poor (Mitlin 2004). Local community leaders sometimes advance their interests and operate on a clientelist basis (see Banks 2015). The participation of the urban poor in decision-making processes in Harare is limited. For example, those living and working on the urban margins do not always get opportunities to express their concerns during budget consultation processes. Without an active voice in municipal policymaking, the needs of the poor remain marginal.

The chapter has also demonstrated that if effectively mobilised and organised the urban poor can also exert some influence on urban governance. The case of the alliance between Zimbabwe Homeless People's Federation and Dialogue on Shelter reveals the power of strong social movements in advocating for the housing rights of the urban poor (Chitekwe-Biti 2009; Muchadenyika 2015). However, the ability of the urban poor to influence the agenda of local government depends largely on the strength and capacity of existing civil society organisations (see Devas 2001). Despite the existence of street trader associations, the voices of these informal sector actors remain marginalised in urban policymaking. The continued marginalisation of street traders in decision-making processes, for instance, exposes them to endemic livelihood insecurities.

Access to land is also important for the livelihoods of the urban poor (Devas 2001). The case of Harare reveals that the urban poor are marginalised when it comes to

issues of land. For example, residents of informal settlements endure endemic tenure insecurities and threats of evictions because they do not have entitlement to the land. The urban poor in Harare also face a serious housing crisis. Economic hardships may also be attributed to informal settlement developments where the citizens (mostly the poor) fail to access adequate housing. Hence, they end up settling informally in the urban fringe in areas that are not usually served with basic services. Informality thus thrives in this context as people resort to illegal means of land and housing appropriation and illegal subdivisions (McGregor and Chatiza 2020). The city's housing delivery models and approaches remain largely 'anti-poor'. For example, the City of Harare has limited or no programmes on social housing to cater for the needs of the poor. Faced with precarious housing challenges, the urban poor resort to self-help schemes, which expose them to vulnerabilities such as forced evictions and displacements. As McGregor and Chatiza (2020: 20) rightly put it: "Harare's informal settlements continue to be symbols of poverty, thwarted development and political control". These cities have therefore been characterised by widespread incidences of poverty.

Another critical area is the city's policies towards the urban informal sector. As highlighted in this chapter, the urban poor in Harare derives their livelihoods by engaging in informal economic activities such as street trading. However, informal sector activities such as street trading are still regarded as illegal and not legitimate livelihood strategies in an urban setting. The City of Harare's attitudes towards the informal sector is often hostile, repressive and coercive, thus contributing to the disruption of livelihoods for thousands of the urban poor working in the 'street economies'. The City's by-laws are often used to 'criminalise' those working in the informal economy, thereby deepening their socio-economic marginalisation. Devas (2001) argued that most cities in developing countries inherited a collection of repressive by-laws and planning standards that are not amenable to the needs of the urban poor. The City of Harare's municipal by-laws and planning approaches are implemented to uphold order and aesthetics as part of the city's quest towards urban modernity. This is not to say urban modernity is bad, but rather, the drive towards urban modernity must also factor in the existing socio-economic realities in the city. The poor in Harare are therefore experiencing living conditions that are constantly militating against building positive livelihoods and therefore have a negative impact on their quality of life (Parnell and Robinson 2012). The livelihoods of the poor are fast becoming real issues of urbanity in Harare, but they are facing strong resistance from institutions that do not recognise these land uses; hence, they are excluded from the planning and management of cities. Informality as an urban land use should therefore find expression in Harare where most institutions are failing to recognise them.

Though the uses of Harare as a case study, the arguments raised in this chapter resonate with other contexts in sub-Saharan African cities. Like in Harare, most cities in sub-Saharan Africa use neoliberal urban governance and policies. As rapid urbanisation has set in and formal economies have failed to cope, socio-economic conditions have progressively become unpalatable and 'poor-unfriendly' (Kamete 2013). The nature of urban governance in most cities in Sub-Saharan Africa has failed to realise

the livelihood realities of most of the population who live in slums and derive their livelihoods from informal economic activities. Various political economic processes are exerting ever-growing pressures on people working in the urban margins. The current neoliberal models of urbanism and governance in Zimbabwe propagate policies, ideas and aspirations that are often unfavourable to these groups (Lindell and Ampaire 2016). Harare also remains guided by its neoliberal urbanisation policies that do not recognise the needs of the poor (Kamete 2013). They are determined to keep the city clean and orderly and such behaviour has resulted in the marginalisation of people in the informal sector in terms of providing essential services that will make their spaces safe and liveable. A long-time scholar on urban Sub-Saharan Africa concluded that planners, who are instrumental in spatialising the search for urban modernity, have "little understanding about how the poor survive" (Rakodi 1993: 207).

5.6 Conclusion

In this chapter, we have argued that urban governance (laws, policies and administrative practices) has a direct impact on the livelihoods of the urban poor. Using the case study of Harare, the chapter has demonstrated that the use of neoliberal urban governance models works against the needs of the poor. The specific policies that were examined, include access to land, mechanisms for citizen participation and voice, regulatory environment, and attitudes towards the informal sector and towards informal housing. Access to urban land is important not just for housing, but for the livelihoods of the poor. In Harare, the land delivery systems are 'anti-poor' and biased towards serving the interests of the political and business elites. Without access to land, the urban poor continue to live in precarity and endure tenure insecurities. This undermines the ability of the poor to live dignified lives, as they encounter multiple evictions and displacements that often disrupt their livelihoods and productive assets. The City of Harare uses the model of representative democracy, where residents elect leaders to advance their interests on the policy agenda. However, there is underrepresentation of people living in poor urban communities such as informal settlements. Those who live in informal settlements have limited opportunities to participate in decision-making processes that affect their lives and livelihoods. Therefore, their needs rarely feature on the urban policy agenda.

The City of Harare has also inherited colonial by-laws and planning standards that they have failed to adjust in line with existing socio-economic realities. The city's regulatory environment remains largely hostile and unresponsive to alternative economic activities such as street trading. Despite the contribution of street trading to the urban economy and livelihoods of the urban poor, this sector remains the primary target of discursive policy measures by the city's authorities. The City of Harare's attitude towards informal housing is also hostile. Public sector interventions and other development initiatives are not always directed towards such places, which continues to widen infrastructure deficits.

There are some key policy measures that the City of Harare can adopt to make its urban governance frameworks pro-poor. These measures can also be replicated in other Sub-Saharan African contexts. First, the urban poor must be actively involved in decision-making processes that impact their lives and livelihoods. The city must move beyond consultations and embrace the practice of coproduction, where the poor become partners in defining how urban resources and opportunities are to be distributed. They must also open spaces to make the voices of the urban poor count.

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