Resolved: On balance, the benefits of urbanization in West Africa outweigh the harms.

February 2021 PF Brief*

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# Contents

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*Contents*

*Contents*

# 1 Topic Analysis by Inko Bovenzi

*Inko Bovenzi debated for Hunter High School in New York City. He qualified to the Tournament of Champions twice and reached outrounds in his junior year. He has reached late elimination rounds in several varsity tournaments, including finals at Yale, quarterfinals at UK and semifinals at Scarsdale. In addition, he was 8th speaker at Harvard, 3rd speaker at UK, and 7th speaker at Scarsdale. He was invited to compete at the Harvard Round Robin twice, and during his senior year, he was ranked first in the country. He was an instructor at the Victory Briefs Institute this summer.*

## 1.1 Overview

West Africa comprises many highly populous nations in Subsaharan Africa, ranging geographically from Mauritania to Nigeria. Its population is roughly 400 million, with a GDP of $650 trillion. Nigeria is the largest country by far in this region, with several important urban centers such as Lagos, the largest city of the region, so it is possible on this topic to make arguments that nearly solely focus on factors unique to Nigeria. As West Africa has been rapidly urbanizing over the last several decades, albeit at a slowing rate, a number of challenges and benefits have arisen, which makes this an exceptionally rich topic.[1] You will likely encounter arguments ranging from diseases to education or from conflict to democracy. Urbanization radically changes the nature of countries in a multitude of ways, affecting nearly every aspect of human life. But before jumping into some arguments, a quick note on the wording of the topic.

This topic is different from typical Public Forum topics in the sense that it is evaluative; there is no fiat. The resolution asks us to consider whether the benefits of urbanization outweigh the harms, not to do anything about it. That means that any argument about harms/benefits of urbanization, that may occur present, future, or past, is fair game.

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[1]https://www.oecd.org/swac/publications/48231121.pdf

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If urbanization theoretically caused a war 20 years ago in West Africa that killed ten million people, that would be an excellent argument and completely fair game on this topic. For this reason, in the absence of a really compelling argument about what will arise in the future, I'd focus on arguments from the past/present, because it will be much easier to establish a high probability of your argument being true. The arguments below are numerous, but should still just be the beginnings of your research.

## 1.2 Aff Arguments

### 1.2.1 Education

This argument is quite simple in nature, but has very large impacts. When people live in an urban area, it is far easier for their children to access education programs funded by the government. In a country with very limited infrastructure, it can be nearly impos-sible for children in rural areas to go to school for several reasons. Their parents may need their labor in order to sustain the family farm, the school may be too far away, there may be a lack of qualified teachers in the area, or the government may lack the funds to support schools in every rural area, among many other potential reasons. As such, the benefits to education can be enormous:

> There is a positive relationship between urbanization and education (table 6.2): school enrollment at both primary and secondary level increases with urbanization. **While enrollment in primary schools is less than 50% in re-gions with an urban population share less than 20%, it is more than 88% for regions with an urban population share between 50% and 90%.** En-rollment in secondary school shows more profound effects. **The average enrollment rate in areas with urbanization less than 20% is 12.2%. This rate is 55.2% for areas with an urbanization rate between 50% and 90%.**[2]

As this study found, secondary education rates soar by nearly 400% in more urbanized areas compared to rural ones. This huge gap is of course meaningful for the quality of life of the citizens in urban areas, increasing employment opportunities, and leading to a full host of benefits for the economy. It is likely impossible for a country with an agrarian economy to industrialize and reach a status similar to that of OECD nations without meaningful investments in education; urbanization seems to allow for just that.

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[2]https://halshs.archives-ouvertes.fr/file/index/docid/1068271/filename/PGDA_WP_119.pdf?fbclid=IwAR2vpuB4_wA7oBVATzd

Moreover, for teams that like to read structural violence arguments, urbanization also decreases the education gap between boys and girls, potentially reducing rates of child-hood marriage (or worse) for girls:

> **The primary enrollment gap in areas where urbanization is between 30% and 40% is 11.9% higher for male than female students, while this gap is only 4.1% in favor of male students in areas where urbanization is between 50% and 90%.** In secondary schools, the dividend is more pronounced. **The secondary enrollment rate gap in areas where urban-ization is between 30% and 40% is 5.2% higher for male than female students, while this rate moves in favor of females with a gap of 2.2% in favor of female students in areas where urbanization is between 50% and 90%.** Urbanization seems to imply a double dividend: fostering global enrollment rate in primary and secondary schools, and closing the gender gap.

In fact, for secondary schools, urbanized areas seem to have completely eliminated the gender gap with respect to school enrollment. Such progress is quite difficult in rural settings, as often families are forced to have numerous children as quickly as possible in order to support their agricultural livelihood. This often is not the case in urban areas.

## 1.2.2 Employment Opportunities

Cities foster significantly more economic activity than urban areas. It's been well docu-mented that urban areas around the world are typically far wealthier than rural areas because (among other factors) it is very challenging to justify building an enterprise to employ a significant number of people in a rural area where a business will struggle to find a significant number of workers with the rate training/education. While farming is by far the largest source of employment in rural areas of Africa (largely subsistence farming), urban areas bring all sorts of employment opportunities:

It would be expected that changing where populations live will have an impact on types of employment. Rural–urban migration has been empirically linked with the structural transformation process: as urban population shares increase, employment tends to shift from agriculture towards industry/manufacturing, or services.[3]

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[3]https://ourworldindata.org/urbanization#urban-populations-tend-to-have-higher-living-standards

While many of these jobs may offer low wages and/or terrible work conditions, they are usually still a meaningful step up from the alternative, and as time passes and education as well as labor laws improve, these problems will decrease. The data shows that on balance, standards of living rise in urban settings:

- in nearly all countries electricity access is higher in urban areas than in rural areas;

- access to improved sanitation is higher in urban areas;

- access to improved drinking water is higher in urban areas;

- access to clean fuels for cooking and heating is higher in urban areas;

- child malnutrition is lower in urban settings[4]

One caveat to this argument and many others on this topic is that there may be a self-selection bias in the data: because living in a city is generally more desirable than living in a rural area, it has been documented that wealthier individuals are more likely to migrate to urban areas:

Note, however, that it is difficult to infer causality between urbanization and these ex-amples. Since urbanization shows a strong correlation with income, such relationships may instead simply show the effect of higher incomes on electricity access, sanitation, drinking water and nutrition. Furthermore, there can also be significant inequalities within urban areas; this is evidenced by the fact that across many low-to-middle in-come countries a high share of the urban population live in slum households (which lack access to all of the basic resources).[5]

The high inequality in urban areas may make the averages look good, while the quality of life for the poorest individuals may not seem much better than rural areas. Strong teams will make sure their data does not fall into this trap when affirming and point out this flaw in affirmative data when negating.

### 1.2.3 Access to Clean Water

Urban areas facilitate access to clean water by allowing governments to easily build water infrastructure to deliver and purify water to large numbers of citizens. While in rural areas, many individuals must trek for miles to access water of often terrible

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[4]ibid
[5]https://ourworldindata.org/urbanization#urban-populations-tend-to-have-higher-living-standards

quality, when millions of people live in close proximity, it becomes a lot cheaper for governments to deliver essential services (such as water) to them:

> This increase in total municipal water demand is driven not just by the in-crease in urban population, **but also by a tendency for economic develop-ment to increase the fraction of the urban population that uses munici-pal supply rather than other sources such as local wells** or private water vendors (Bartlett, 2003, Bhatia and Falkenmark, 1993). Indeed, increasing access to municipal supply for the world's poor is one of the Millennium Development Goals, since **municipal supply is generally cleaner and safer**
>
> **than other water sources** (Howard and Bartram, 2003). Moreover, the eco-nomic development that generally goes along with urbanization increases per-capita water use, as new technologies such as showers, washing ma-chines, and dishwashers increase residential use of water (McDonald et al., 2011a). The overall increase in total municipal water demand causes cities to search for new adequate, relatively clean water sources, leading to the **cre-ation of sometimes quite complex systems of urban water infrastructure** (Alcott et al., 2013, Brown et al., 2009, Chau, 1993).[6]

This water infrastructure is also easier for the government to regulate due to greater cen-tralization. In this way, governments can improve water quality by cracking down on diseases and chemical contaminants in water. The impacts of this argument are signif-icant: water borne diseases kill millions, and there are secondary harms to poor water access as well. Healthcare becomes more challenging, humans must spend precious hours of the day getting water (instead of going to school or working for income), and local water sources may even increase mosquito populations, resulting in higher malaria deaths.

While there may be potential problems with water shortages (maybe a neg argument), it is likely that greater concentration of people and wealth and cities can solve this prob-lem:

> Cities by their nature spatially concentrate the water demands of thousands or millions of people into a small area, which by itself would increase stress on finite supplies of available freshwater near the city center (McDonald et al., 2011a). However, **cities also represent a concentration of economic and**

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[6]https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC7111622/?fbclid=IwAR02sYdYu32MC63cgf6U4rLYy_ALfkCgaCoy44YA507-Y_PW6nKPtnCD1Ss

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**political power** (Bettencourt et al., 2007), which cities use to build urban wa-ter infrastructure to satisfy their demand. As this **infrastructure can go out far from the city center, or exploit new sources of surface water, ground-water or desalination, it often helps cities escape water stress.**

### 1.2.4 Foreign Aid

Higher urban concentration increases the ease with which the United States, United Nations, and other countries/NGOs can deliver aid to impoverished people in West-ern Africa. One of the greatest challenges with aid is that a significant portion of it is stolen en route; some studies have suggested that up to 80% of American food aid never reaches its intended target. This can be because distributing aid to rural regions gives plenty of opportunities for extremists or terrorists to capture the aid and use it to fi-nance their activities. This argument will have two impacts: first, more aid will reach its intended target, reducing poverty, and second, greater success rates with aid may encourage foreign bodies to increase it. In fact, it has been empirically shown that ur-ban areas receive greater foreign aid, largely because it is much easier to deliver said aid:

> The international aid donors must face the additional question of where their interventions can be most effective. From that point of view, **the ur-ban concentration of bureaucracies, services and people - including the poor - weighs in favor of greater attention to the cities.** The aid agencies themselves are urban based; the goods and services financed by foreign aid pass through the urban hands of bank- ers, brokers and freight forwarders; the organiza- tions through which the aid agencies must deal are largely ur-ban based; **and the operations over which control is facilitated by physical proximity are urban**.[7]

There are many different competing estimates for the success of foreign aid, but recent study estimated that 700 million lives have been saved from international aid programs that urban areas facilitate, though this success will only be maintained through contin-ued action on behalf of donor nations:

> **International aid financing and innovation has helped to save nearly 700 million lives in the past 25 years**, but those gains could be lost if momen-

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[7]https://www.jstor.org/stable/pdf/43191942.pdf?refreqid=excelsior%3A12660c492c0dc6740133bf9f60b5b299

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tum and political will wane, global health experts said on Monday. A report by international aid advocacy group the ONE Campaign said the progress against preventable deaths and diseases since 1990 could stall, and even go into reverse, unless donor governments make new commitments to innova-tion and action.[8]

## 1.3 Neg Arguments

### 1.3.1 Living Conditions/Disease

Higher population density increases the spread of infectious disease by increasing the number of humans an average person comes into close contact with every day. For ar-guments about diseases, your arguments need not be (and should not be) limited to the coronavirus or pandemics. Most of the most damaging diseases in Western Africa are not pandemics because they are not significant threats to developed countries, either due to different climates or better healthcare. Urban poverty also increases the number of people living in overcrowded conditions, especially in the context of the rapid pop-ulation growth currently in West Africa. Urban centers also create trade routes along which diseases can spread:

> In 2009, for the first time in history, the urban population of the world sur-passed the rural population1; **proliferating the number of people living in slums: settlements marked by deplorable living conditions, overcrowd-ing, and inadequate housing and sanitation**.2 The lack of timely responses to rapid growth in urban centres has created new challenges for the control of infectious disease, providing **increased opportunities for contact and ex-posure**.3 The global movement of people and goods has long served as a **vec-tor for infectious disease; escalating outbreaks such as the plague, cholera, smallpox, HIV/AIDS, severe acute respiratory syndrome and many others, to the level of global pandemics**.4., 5. While urbanization and trade routes have been recognized as critical vectors for infectious disease, their role in noncommunicable diseases (NCDs) is only beginning to be acknowledged.

Noncommunicable diseases (NCDs) are diseases such as tobacco addiction that kill mil-lions of people every year but aren't typically considered in the category of other ill-

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[8]https://www.reuters.com/article/us-health-global-progress/international-aid-saves-700-million-lives-but-gains-at-risk-report-idUSKCN1MO0W9

nesses. But urbanization helps spread them too. The article cited above finds that rates of obesity, diabetes, smoking, and other such things are significantly elevated in urban areas, as advertisers of unhealthy products (such as processed foods) find millions of new potential customers in these areas. NCDs kill millions—it's estimated that 27% of all deaths in Nigeria are from such diseases.[9] Disease is just one of the many dangers in slums and other areas with high population density and high poverty. Malnourish-ment, violence, a lack of employment and education, and several other risks are present when a country with a rapidly increasing population yet an under-resourced govern-ment begins to rapidly urbanize (as is the case in West Africa).

## 1.3.2 Environmental Harms

Although urban areas typically have lower per capita carbon emissions than rural ones (fun fact—the county in the United States with the lowest emissions per capita is Man-hattan), cities which rapidly urbanize without proper waste management systems can have major environmental problems. For example, this somewhat wonkish study ex-amines how soil quality degrades nearby urban settings:

> Tropical soils typically have low cation exchange capacity and nutrient con-tents. Both are enhanced by soil organic matter (SOM), which is thus partic-ularly important for the fertility of these soils. In this study, we assessed the influence of urbanization on SOM, carbonate contents and pH of arable soils of Kumasi (Ghana, West Africa), since **rapid urban sprawl is widespread in West Africa, whereby in many West African cities urban farming is piv-otal to the food security of their population**... We conclude that dumping of organic and inorganic waste (including ash, bones, egg shells, concrete and mortar) increases SOM stocks and soil pH, but also leads to **accumu-lation of non-degradable solid materials (including plastic, metals etc.)**.
> These findings point to the **need of an improved urban waste management system**, separating degradable and non-degradable waste.

While biodegradable waste may help soil quality, the spread of plastics, chemicals, and other substances can lead to significant harms to humans. This can lead to widespread crop failure, resulting in starvation/malnutrition, as well as potentially global impacts. Much of the plastic/other chemicals present in the world's oceans and thus omnipresent

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[9]https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC7111622/?fbclid=IwAR02sYdYu32MC63cgf6U4rLYy_ALfkCgaCoy44YA507-Y_PW6nKPtnCD1Ss

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in our daily lives actually comes from developing countries, as in recent decades devel-oped countries have (finally) improved their standards for waste management while developing countries simply don't have the resources for this. A somewhat challenging but potentially very high impact neg argument might look at the role urbanization plays in degrading not just the health of the local population, but potentially global health.

### 1.3.3 Conflict Aggravation

As urban areas in Africa have expanded, frustrating income inequality, a lack of re-sources, as well as corruption and generally poor governance have resulted in increas-ing civil conflict:

> Consequently, a significant change of course in policy is in order if human security in urban areas is to be assured in the years ahead. **Social unrest, conflict and violence are not inevitable symptoms of Africa's urban tran-sition. Rather, they are associated with material deprivation, vertical and horizontal inequalities and political marginalisation**. In urban areas, tack-ling these issues requires a proactive approach to managing the growth of ur-ban settlements, concerted efforts to strengthen urban governance systems and policy strategies designed to support and accelerate urban economic development.[10]

While this result was certainly not inevitable, the resolution asks us to evaluate how urbanization has played out, now how it would have played out in a more utopian world. Population growth in urban areas is more challenging to deal with for govern-ments (and thus is more likely to lead to conflict) because of the two factors that increase urban population size:

> In the absence of repressive measures to restrict mobility, p**opulations will naturally shift from rural to urban habitation in search of opportunity.** Moreover, cross-national estimates of the components of overall urban pop-ulation growth indicate that **migration and reclassification account for just 40% while natural increase** (i.e. population growth within urban areas) ac-counts for 60% (Montgomery, 2008). In Africa, where net rural–urban mi-gration rates are relatively low and possibly falling (Montgomery et al., 2004;

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[10]https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/286317.pdf

> Potts, 2009) the contribution of natural increase to overall urban
> population growth may well be higher.

Both localized rapid growth and migration makes inevitable resource strain (caused by a variety of factors including climate change) most severe in urban areas, which can result in increased conflict. While the conflicts generated by these sorts of problems may not claim more lives than the number of people helped by urbanization, these conflicts breed incredible instability and threaten the success of basically every aff argument on this topic, allowing a strategic neg team to win the weighing debate with a conflict-based argument.

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# 2 Topic Analysis by Yukiho Semimoto

*Yukiho Semimoto is a current freshman at Georgetown University studying Inter-national Politics. She debated for five years at Edgemont High School in Scarsdale, New York, serving as the captain of her team. In her competitive career, she qualified to the TOC twice and reached late elims like quarterfinals at Harvard and Emory, and amassed several speaker awards including 3rd at Emory, 2nd at Scarsdale, 6th at Lexington, and top speaker at Lakeland. As a coach, her students have finaled tour-naments like Glenbrooks and championed several others, and have amassed more than 10 gold bids. She was also an instructor at VBI this summer.*

## 2.1 Introduction

Hi everyone! Welcome to the February 2021 topic: "On balance, the benefits of urban-ization in West Africa outweigh the harms." I think this topic is pretty interesting in a lot of ways, and I'm pretty excited for the debates that are to come. Two things to note right off the bat:

First of all, this topic does not have the United States as the main actor of the resolution. While the US might not be completely irrelevant to this debate, this topic will no longer be about what is in the best interest of US economic, healthcare or foreign policy, but instead the unique economic and domestic circumstances that will be most beneficial for a different region. Personally, I think that it is refreshing to see a topic that is not US-oriented and euro-centric as it will allow debaters to dive deeper into a region that is often overlooked in Public Forum debate, and learn about specific trends and countries in West Africa instead of grouping all African nations as developing countries.

Secondly, this topic is an "on balance" resolution where you debate the benefits of a specific phenomenon over its harms, instead of a policy-action resolution where you debate whether or not a policy should be passed. While this will not drastically change

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the nature of the topic argument-wise, debaters will no longer be advocating for the sta-tus quo or trying to reject it, only arguing the benefits of urbanization in West Africa and the harms. These types of topics will generally have a broader literature base, especially because a lot of arguments are based on what already happened historically instead of speculative arguments for when a policy changes.

Overall, February topics are a fun one and the beginning of the end to a wonderful season.

With all of that in mind, let's dive right into the topic and the strategies that we should consider within it!

## 2.2 Background

I think this topic is pretty straightforward in terms of what it is asking debaters to eval-uate. To understand the topic better, it'll be important to properly define and identify what is topical (relevant) to the resolution.

### 2.2.1 What is West Africa?

First, which countries make up Western Africa?

According to the United Nations, Western Africa consists of seventeen countries and one British territory.[1] These countries include:

> Benin, Burkina Faso, the island nation of Cape Verde, Côte d'Ivoire (Ivory Coast), The Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Mali, (Mauri-tania), Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Sao Tome and Principe, Togo, and the United Kingdom Overseas Territory of Saint Helena, Ascension, and Tristan da Cunha, several islands scattered in the South Atlantic Ocean.

Memorizing all these nations in West Africa probably will not be the best use of your time, but it will most likely be beneficial to be familiar with these nations so that 1) the examples country cases that you might use for arguments that you read are actually rel-evant and from West Africa and 2) you can distinguish whether or not your opponents are reading arguments about countries that are not relevant to the debate. For example--

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[1]https://www.nationsonline.org/oneworld/map/west-africa-map.htm

we are not talking about Northern Africa or Central Africa, or individual nations like Libya, Egypt, South Africa, or Djibouti in this topic. West Africa is a specific region with unique trends and a unique history where urbanization and economic development oc-curred differently.

While West Africa is incredibly diverse in its physical geography, languages, culture, and economies, there are some general trends that we can note within the region. Six of the countries in West Africa were a part of the top 10 GDP growth countries in the con-tinent in 2018, indicating fast economic growth compared to other nations; at the same time, West Africa's average GDP growth projection was at 3.6% growth for 2019, where countries like Nigeria seemed to pull down the average of the region's performance compared to other regions like East Africa.[2]

There is also a unique history of colonization for West Africa mostly by France and Britain, with a noticeable effect on economic development in these nations:

> The region has a long history of post-colonial civil wars that have created an obstacle to economic development. In recent years peace has widely been achieved with the signing of treaties.[3]

Colonialism and its history will probably not be that relevant in the internal link debates of economic growth and the harms of urbanization, but it might be important to note how these nations got to their current economic conditions to evaluate what went wrong and what didn't.

### 2.2.2 What is Urbanization?

Second, what is urbanization?

Urbanization is defined by Britannica as:

> ...the process by which large numbers of people become permanently con-centrated in relatively small areas, forming cities.[4]

The trend of rising cities is particularly relevant in West Africa as according to the OECD, Western Africa has been rapidly urbanizing for the past 50 years.[5]

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[2]http://www.west-africa-brief.org/content/en/west-africa%E2%80%99s-growth-prospects-remain-strong
[3]https://pitt.libguides.com/c.php?g=12378&p=65818
[4]https://www.britannica.com/topic/urbanization
[5]https://www.oecd.org/swac/publications/48231121.pdf

Importantly, this topic does not specify the timeline of urbanization that we should be evaluating. Indeed, if the resolution was "On balance, the benefits of urbanization in West Africa have outweighed the harms," the resolution would be specific to the urbanization that has already occured. This means that arguments about future trends in urbanization could be topical and relevant in this topic, and that affirmative teams can read arguments that say that even if urbanization may have failed in the past in this region, it won't in the future (and vice versa). It will be up to the debate whether or not those future benefits will actually outweigh the past harms, but I do believe that arguments about future trends are reasonable for this topic.

In general, past benefits and harms tend to have a higher probability in terms of evaluat-ing those benefits and harms over future potential consequences of urbanization, consid-ering that past actions have already happened and have had close to a 100% probability. In that case, teams reading future-trend arguments will be required to outweigh in a different way and will probably require some high-magnitude impacts.

## 2.3 Aff Arguments

### 2.3.1 Economic Arguments

The narrative of the affirmative should be that urbanization is a necessity for progress. Indeed, there are a whole slew of arguments that you can run in terms of the economic benefits of urbanization. The World Bank highlights the benefits of urbanization eco-nomically and outlines the general narrative for this argument:

> Cities have many advantages. They allow workers to be closer to jobs, in-creasing opportunities and fueling productivity. They bring people together physically, facilitating the exchange of ideas and bringing about innovations. High densities make it cheaper to provide services efficiently and equitably. As a result, many of the benefits of urban life – productivity and livability - are associated with proximity within the city.[6]

Indeed, the economic benefits of urbanization can be seen in several ways:

**Job creation/opportunities**

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[6]https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/bitstream/handle/10986/30042/127145-WP-PUBLIC-TheChallengesOfUrbanizationInWestAfrica.pdf?sequence=5&isAllowed=y

Urbanization directly pulls people out of poverty and improves economic outcomes by creating jobs, increasing opportunities, and allowing for easier access to jobs through transportation and better distance.

First, this is done through infrastructure development. The World Bank explains the dynamic of infrastructure as:

Certain public goods, such as infrastructures and basic services, can be provided more efficiently and equitably when populations are large and densely packed. This is be-cause urban density has the potential to lower the unit costs of public service provision, thus enabling governments to extend access to basic services. Conversely, lack of ade-quate investments in physical infrastructure could result in congestion, pollution, and widening inequalities for urban dwellers

The creation of infrastructure is important. It creates better opportunities to access jobs and basic necessities, and also creates short-term jobs through the physical creation of infrastructure along with long-term jobs that will use the location and sustain infras-tructure.

Second, is agglomeration. The proximity of firms in cities also means that there is in-creased productivity, increased wages, and thus better job opportunities. The World Bank argues for the benefit of agglomeration for economic growth, also arguing that there will be increased skill sets for workers:

> In addition, urbanization drives growth because cities help increase firms' productivity through agglomeration benefits.3 Close spatial proximity has many benefits. Firms located near each other can share suppliers, thus low-ering input costs. Thick labor markets reduce search costs, giving firms a larger pool of workers from which to choose. Moreover, spatial proximity makes it easier for workers to share information and learn from each other.[7]

The impacts of urbanization are generally good for income-

> The rapid growth of cities in Africa is presenting the continent with a ma-jor opportunity to enhance productivity and living standards. In most parts of the world, rapid city growth has triggered economies of scale and spe-cialization along with knowledge spillovers, thereby boosting productivity. **International evidence suggests that doubling of a city's size boosts in-come per capita between 3 percent and 8 percent.** In fact, countries that are

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[7]https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/bitstream/handle/10986/30042/127145-WP-PUBLIC-TheChallengesOfUrbanizationInWestAfrica.pdf?sequence=5&isAllowed=y

more developed have more urbanization, and countries that switch from slow economic development to rapid economic development also switch from slow urbanization to rapid urbanization.[8]

Overall, all of these arguments for urbanization and better job opportunities require debaters to win the argument that these jobs are actually being given to those that need it. In other words, negative strategies might argue that these jobs go to high-skilled workers and perpetuate inequalities, or only benefit some sectors of cities at the expense of the poor.

**Recessions/Economic Shocks**

Another link into economic prosperity is presenting recessions and economic shocks. Better economic growth generally acts as a crutch for countries to recover from shocks, which can be important as economic shocks create the most vulnerable conditions for the poor. Indeed, the OECD argues:

> However, some analyses have shown that urbanisation is linked to economic growth. The example of Ghana supports this view. Ghana was hard hit by the oil price shock and the drop in agricultural raw material prices but recovered faster than other countries.[9]

Economic shocks lead to large impacts that can be weighed pretty heavily over negative impacts in terms of the scope of people it affects. On the other hand, economic shocks are sometimes argued to not be a scalar impact in that if it has already occurred you can't cause it again or make it worse-- which either negates the impact or mitigates it, which would be something to keep in mind when running these type of arguments.

**Innovation**

Innovation tends to be higher in urbanized cities.[10] This can be important for GDP growth but also more economic development and further economic opportunities. In-novation can also generally have a variety of impacts not just terminalizing to economic opportunities, as innovation can save lives too.

**Investment**

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[8]https://www.brookings.edu/blog/africa-in-focus/2020/01/21/prerequisites-to-getting-africas-urbanization-right/

[9]https://www.oecd.org/swac/publications/48231121.pdf

[10]https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/bitstream/handle/10986/30042/127145-WP-PUBLIC-TheChallengesOfUrbanizationInWestAfrica.pdf?sequence=5&isAllowed=y

Investors tend to invest in places that will reap benefits and rewards so there generally exists a link between urbanization and more capital inflows into nations.

### 2.3.2 Health

Cities can mean that there are better health services, which can improve health outcomes of citizens and save lives. This not only is an impact in and of itself, but becomes a prerequisite to economic development as a healthy workforce is crucial to productive economies.

This argument is the affirmative version of the negative argument of worse health out-comes in urban slums and urbanized cities overall due to pollution and other factors, thus the benefits and harms would have to be weighed over each other to actually see which effects affect West African nations more.

## 2.4 Neg Arguments

As my economics professor once said, economic growth does not mean that there exists economic development. While GDP, investment capital, and economic activity may increase in regions, that does not always means that it increases the economic wellbeing of the people and actually improves their quality of life. It does not mean that the proper infrastructure that is useful for most people are being created, or that access to basic necessities will always increase. There are times when economic growth breeds income inequality, and harmful economic impacts for the people.

That should be the core of the economic argument on the neg-- but there are a couple of nuances taht this argument can make.

### 2.4.1 Diseases/Illnesses

Diseases and illnesses are arguably more widespread in urbanized regions of West Africa.

**First,** is because of the development of slums.

> West Africa's urban poor, like most of their counterparts in the developing world, are forced to develop adaptive and resourceful responses to the prob-lems that they face. Across the region, informal settlements of all kinds have sprung up in response to the acute absence of broad based access to formal housing. Many of these settlements are unimaginatively lumped together as 'slums,' primarily denoting the services and regulatory standards that they lack, rather than the social support, economic opportunities, and housing stability that they offer.[11]

This can be particularly problematic as slums in urban areas tend to have poor living conditions that facilitate illnesses and communicable diseases.

> When large numbers of people congregate in cities, many problems result, particularly for the poor. For example, many rural migrants who settle in an urban slum area bring their families and their domesticated animals—both pets and livestock—with them. This influx of humans and animals leads to vulnerability of all migrants to circulating communicable diseases and the potential to establish an urban transmission cycle. Further, most urban poor live in slums that are unregulated, have congested conditions, are over-crowded, are positioned near open sewers, and restricted to geographically dangerous areas such as hillsides, riverbanks, and water basins subject to landslides, flooding, or industrial hazards.[12]

**Second,** because of lack of access to food. Not only do urban cities have higher costs of food, they also are likely to have more contaminated food that is more unhygienic. Nutritional loss can lead to health effects that are incredibly harmful.

Health outcomes are generally a prerequisite to economic development considering that healthy workers are important for a productive economy. Infectious diseases are also an important impact considering the likelihood of pandemic-like diseases spreading a lot faster, causing a high-magnitude problem for these urban cities. Overall, I think that the impact level of this argument will be pretty large and should be weighed heavily against aff arguments of promoting economic growth.

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[11]https://media.africaportal.org/documents/Urbanization-in-westafrica_1_XYt3baU.pdf
[12]https://publichealthreviews.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/s40985-019-0116-0

## 2.4.2 Inequality

Economic growth is not always evenly distributed, considering that inequality is often a result of city creation. Yale University confirms:

> … the benefits of life in the city are not evenly distributed. Only a small percentage of any fast growing urban population really gets access to urban opportunities and this number tends to be shrinking further. Organized and affluent neighbourhoods of cities, receive all the benefits of urban living. The other part – the world's one billion mostly African, Asian and Latin Amer-ican slum dwellers, are more likely to die earlier, experience more hunger and disease, attain less education and have fewer chances of employment than those urban residents that do not reside in a slum.[13]

Inequality tends to lead to poverty. When other people are better off, the cost of living and the cost of basic necessities can go up because people can afford it more. This leaves those in poverty behind in the dust. Inequalities also means less access to opportunities, less education, and generally negates a lot of the affirmative arguments about economic growth.

The question to ask would be is economic growth and development even possible with-out creating some sort of inequalities and what impacts might matter more? This would thus require some weighing between inequality-type arguments on the negative and the pure economic arguments on the aff.

## 2.4.3 Environmental Harms

Industrial pollution will most likely lead to bad health outcomes, but the development of cities most likely has other environmental impacts due to environmental degradation and the use of resources. The following paper argues that:

> Urban areas, growing both in population and in land cover, pose threats to the integrity of the continent's ecosystems and biodiversity but their growth also create opportunities for conservation. The burgeoning urban popula-tions, especially in Sub-Saharan Africa, increase the strain on already insuf-ficient infrastructure and bring new governance challenges.[14]

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[13]https://campuspress.yale.edu/tribune/has-rising-urbanisation-around-the-world-increased-poverty-rates/

[14]https://www.researchgate.net/publication/320543227_Urbanization_in_Africa_Challenges_and_opportunities_for_conservatio

### 2.4.4 Housing/Education

Urbanization can put pressure on service availability like housing and education which can be two critical aspects of poverty alleviation. Indeed, a study of Ghana's urbanisa-tion concludes:

> "The rapid pace of urbanisation in Ghana has outpaced planning provisions, and has created pressure on the availability and access to urban services including housing, education, etc"[15]

Lack of housing leads to homelessness and increase in slum creation, and lack of educa-tional opportunities lead to less educated children and less poverty alleviation overall which will be important for those in poverty.

## 2.5 Weighing

Weighing on this topic will be complicated in that both the neg and the aff could poten-tially access similar impact levels regarding economic growth and poverty alleviation. This then just becomes a debate for who accesses that impact better through the war-ranted link level arguments about how urbanization has made those in poverty better off in West Africa.

To make your weighing better, my biggest advice is to have better evidence. Usually comparative weighing analysis can be done through evidence. Studies that are more specific to the region of West Africa probably is better than a study that is just about Sub-Saharan Africa. Studies that are more of a meta-analysis can be better and can account for the potential negative or positive effects of urbanization that your opponents might read about. It will also be useful to have examples of the arguments that you read. For example, if you want to talk about the success of urbanization in West Africa, you want to find examples of where it worked and how well it worked so that you are not reading theoretical arguments and lower probability arguments.

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[15]https://ideas.repec.org/a/gam/jlands/v9y2020i9p300-d404719.html

## 2.6 Conclusion

Overall, I think this topic will be a very interesting and educational one to debate. There are definitely less squirrelly arguments about conflict scenarios to make on this topic and more core economic arguments that people should try to pursue strategy-wise.

With that in mind, have fun, and prep on!

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# 3 Topic Analysis by Ezra Kohrman

*Ezra competed for Gunn High School, where he founded the PF program his fresh-man year. He amassed 7 bids to the Tournament of Champions, qualifying three times. Notably, he championed Berkeley and reached semifinals at Stanford and Presentation. Individually, he won speaking awards at Stanford, Berkeley, James Logan, and Presentation. Ezra will be attending Stanford University in the fall.*

## 3.1 Introduction

The resolution for February 2021 is "Resolved: On balance, the benefits of urbanization in West Africa outweigh the harms."

I'll start my analysis by breaking the topic down, exploring what urbanization means, what causes it, theoretical frameworks for understanding its impact on development, and finally, what it looks like in West Africa. Then, I'll talk about different ways to interpret the resolution. Lastly, I'll discuss lines of argumentation for the affirmative and negative sides. Let's dive in.

## 3.2 Background Information

With every debate topic, it's important to have a foundational understanding of the var-ious phenomena at play; but particularly with resolutions in the economic sphere, hav-ing a conceptual grasp of relevant theory can be the difference between barely breaking and advancing deep into out rounds. What's more, because the February resolution is in the context of a region of the world, composed of 17 countries, specificity and in-depth research will be everything. There's no cutting corners.

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### 3.2.1 What is Urbanization?

Urbanization refers to a spatial transformation of an economy caused by a population moving from a rural, often agricultural existence, to urban settlements, otherwise known as cities. Notably, the term can be used to describe both the proportion of a population living in urban areas and the active process of a society transitioning from a rural to an urban way of life.

The latter movement has been ongoing for millennia. Yet, under the weight of rising globalization and capitalism, urbanization has spread across the globe, spurring the creation of megacities like Beijing, Delhi, Istanbul, Tokyo, and Cairo.

### 3.2.2 What Causes Urbanization?

Internal rural to urban migration is one way urbanization can occur. Economists gen-erally posit that this form of urbanization is driven by two types of incentives: push factors and pull factors. Declines in agricultural productivity, natural disasters, and food insecurity can "push" people to migrate to cities. Simultaneously, the allure of employment opportunities, higher wages, and more robust public institutions (schools, hospitals, banks, etc.) can "pull" people to urban areas.

Another major cause of urbanization is natural population growth, which is when more people are born in existing urban areas. Developing countries, in particular, have higher fertility rates, translating to booming population growth.

### 3.2.3 How Does Urbanization Impact Development?

I will cover two contemporary frameworks for understanding the nexus between urban-ization and economic development.

The first is modernization theory. The framework, grounded in classical economics, argues that labor mobility enhances resource allocation. When migrants move from an area of relatively low marginal productivity (i.e. a small farm) to an area of higher marginal productivity (i.e. a city), the total economic output of society increases. In a similar fashion, the densification of cities also allows for economies of agglomeration and greater interconnectedness. Urbanization is therefore needed for a society to in-dustrialize. On a related note, cities contain modernizing institutions such as schools,

factories, and mass media, which are conducive to the diffusion of modern practices and development.[1] In conclusion, the view postulates that urbanization has a positive effect on economic growth.

The urban bias theory, in contrast, makes the argument that in underdeveloped coun-tries, urban elites, who have political power, pressure governments to adopt macroeco-nomic policies that disproportionately favor urban areas. For example, a country might concentrate investment in non-agricultural sectors or offer tax exemptions for urban factories. These policies can create economic inefficiencies and unhealthy disparities between rural and urban areas of society. Under this view, high levels of urbanization can impede economic development.

Both of these explanations lack a high degree of rigor, so I recommend exploring these frameworks more deeply, especially if you're interested in running arguments about economic development.

### 3.2.4 What Does Urbanization Look Like in West Africa?

Let's start with some background. West Africa, home to 350 million people, is com-prised of the following countries (under the UN definition): Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Cabo Verde, Chad, Côte d'Ivoire, Equatorial Guinea, The Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone and Togo.

The region of West Africa has a long history of conflict and political instability. Yet, in spite of numerous challenges, most countries in West Africa have adopted some sort of democratic system. Professor Abdoulaye Bathily at Cheikh Anta Diop University notes:

> "At the moment, all countries in the region have embraced democracy in one form or another. Even post-conflict countries like Liberia and Sierra Leone have been able to consolidate post-war democracy by holding successive elections and changing government without violence. However, elections – a hallmark of democratic progress – are yet to lead to development in terms of human, social, political, and economic transformation. Concerns remain that electoral management and democracy in West Africa, and elsewhere in Africa, have faced several challenges. These include institutional weak-nesses, factional struggles, poor political leadership, prolongation of power,

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[1]https://www.jstor.org/stable/pdf/2095451.pdf

inequality, marginalisation, social injustice, lack of rule of law and respect for 12 human rights, amongst others. Following the prevailing sociopolitical situations in West Africa, it can be asserted that the sub-region is facing a real threat of democratic regression. A review of the 2014 the Economist Intelli-gence Unit Democracy 2014 Index Report reveals that (with the exception of Ghana that scored 57.2% (2012-13)), most of the countries in the region found themselves at the lowest rung of the democratic ladder. For example, four countries (including Nigeria, Togo, Guinea and Cote D'Ivoire) were in-cluded among the ten worst democracies in the world."[2]

To be clear, the political affairs of West Africa vary widely country-by-country. For ex-ample, in 2020, Mali experienced a military uprising, rolling back much of the country's democratic progress. By contrast, Ghana continues to have a vibrant democracy, widely considered to be a model for the continent. This is all to say you should research the politics of West Africa on a country-by-country basis.

On the economic side, the region has experienced relatively steady economic growth and poverty reduction for the past two decades. West African economies are primarily built upon services, natural resource extraction, and agriculture. The African Develop-ment Bank Group offers a helpful decomposition of regional economic activity (albeit before Covid-19):

"The service sector's share in the economy is the largest in most countries, and manufacturing's share is the smallest in all of them. Demand in the economies comes primarily—70 percent on average—from private con-sumption, but gross capital formation is expected to be the fastest growing area of demand in the next couple of years."[3]

In addition, West Africa is one of the fastest-growing global sources of energy. The two richest nations in West Africa, Nigeria and Ghana, are large petroleum exporters, with oil revenues driving most of their growth.

Let's get back to urbanization, though. The OECD provides a helpful timeline of demo-graphic trends in West Africa:

"In the ten years between 2000 and 2010 the urban population grew by 48 million people, reaching 133 million; this represents an increase of close to

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[2]https://www.osiwa.org/ecowas_at_40/future-democracy-peace-west-africa/
[3]https://www.afdb.org/en/documents/document/west-africa-economic-outlook-2018-100849

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60%. The average annual urban population growth rate rose to 4.6%, up from 4.1% in the previous decade (1990–2000). The 4.6% urban population growth rate equals the average of the last 30 years (Figure 2.1).Eleven coun-tries saw an increase in their urban population growth rate during the last decade; in seven of these countries growth over the last decade was faster than the average for 1980 to 2010."[4]

Since this report, the regional demographic transformation has only accelerated. Be-tween 2015 and 2040, the population of West Africa is projected to double,[5] with cities likely to absorb most of this population growth. The rapidity of this urbanization is unprecedented. Interestingly, though, West Africa's urban agglomeration is primarily driven by natural population growth. The OECD describes:

"West African cities have absorbed two thirds of the population growth reg-istered between 1960 and 1990. Today, they host 45% of the population6. This urban growth essentially and initially occurred due to population move-ments from rural areas. This is no longer the case; population growth in cities is now mainly due to the increasing birth rate in urban areas which ac-counts for 70% to 80 of this growth, with the rural exodus only representing 20 to 30% of urban growth. Urban growth is no longer as rapid as it was in the 1970s and 1980s, but it will continue, and the urban population is likely to account for about 60% of the total population by 2020/2025.…

Urban growth has not been accompanied by the depopulation of the rural areas, where the population has continued and will continue to increase ac-cording to all forecasts. The word (rural) exodus which according to the dic-tionary means "massive departures" and "flights" is not appropriate in most cases; even though it applies to some dramatic situations (severe drought, long lasting conflict)."[6]

In this way, the urbanization going on in West Africa is remarkably unique. In most places in the world, urbanization is thought to strip rural areas of workers and capital. However, because urbanization in West Africa is driven so heavily by increasing birth rates, the tradeoffs between rural and urban growth are likely not as zero-sum.

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[4]https://www.oecd.org/publications/urbanisation-dynamics-in-west-africa-1950-2010-9789264252233-en.htm

[5]https://sahelresearch.africa.ufl.edu/research/mapping-urbanization-in-west-africa/

[6]https://www.oecd.org/migration/38481393.pdf

Even cities themselves in West Africa are quite different from other urbanizing areas of the world such as Seoul and Dubai. Cris Beauchemin provides an insightful description:

> "Contrary to popular perception, most urban dwellers in Africa do not live in the slums of mega-cities. In fact, most African cities are small by inter-national standards. Lagos in Nigeria is the only sub-Saharan African urban agglomeration to be included in the UN list of the 30 largest urban agglomer-ations in the world. Urban systems in Africa, and more specifically in West Africa, are quite different from those in Latin America or Asia. There are no major metropolises (with the exception of Lagos), but many small and medium-sized towns (as a result of the reclassification process)."[7]

Urbanization in West Africa is further complicated by poor governing institutions. Due to underdeveloped infrastructure and a lack of basic services, cities in West Africa don't always follow traditional models of development. Urban settlements have, instead, pro-liferated the occurrence of informal employment. The OECD notes:

"Since 1980, the informal sector has become the main provider of urban jobs and will most likely remain so in the medium-term, even if modern enterprises account for 80% of the non-agricultural value added. However, the simplistic division of urban employ-ment between the modern sector and the informal sector is slowly losing its significance: the new class of entrepreneurs developing from this "informal" sector will determine to a large extent the region's economic future."

Once again, the development processes taking root in West Africa are, in many ways, unique to the region. Consequently, it might be difficult (and possibly inaccurate) to draw parallels between the economic and political systems of West Africa and those of other countries that have experienced high levels of urbanization.

## 3.3 Frameworks

Unlike many PF resolutions, the February topic does not call for any plan or policy to be implemented. Rather, it asks debaters to simply evaluate whether the process of urban-ization in West Africa has and continues to be, on net, beneficial or harmful. It's hard to imagine, however, a world where West Africa is void of any degree of urbanization. Furthermore, considering that most of the urbanization going on today is being driven

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[7] https://link.springer.com/referenceworkentry/10.1007%2F978-1-4020-4425-0_9721

by rising birth rates, it is certainly not a stretch to argue that urbanization, on some level, is unstoppable. Thus, in the absence of a clear counterfactual, I believe there are three main ways to accordingly frame the round.

On the one hand, debaters can focus, generally, on whether the idea of more people living in cities in West Africa is good or bad. In simpler terms, is more urbanization better than less? This interpretation offers, potentially, the most straightforward way of approaching the resolution. However, it does not provide a precise border for what constitutes affirmative and negative ground. On the other hand, debaters could argue that the only alternative to urbanization in West Africa is massive outward migration. In other words, if people in West Africa can no longer agglomerate, large populations will be forced to live in some other part of the world such as a neighboring country. This framework could allow for interesting debates on whether West Africa offers an opti-mal environment for urbanization, in comparison to other alternative environments. I worry, though, this framework will require lots of extra work to run. It depends on prov-ing, for example, that it's feasible for people to migrate to other countries, and it could require specifying which countries they would migrate to--two claims that could be dif-ficult to substantiate with evidence. Finally, teams could argue that we should strictly focus on urban migration. Essentially, because urbanization via natural increase is in-evitable, the only question is whether more people should migrate from rural areas to urban cities. Under this framework, debaters could read more comparative arguments about a world where people migrate to cities versus a world where people stay in their rural hometowns.

While all three of these frameworks are imperfect, I have a hunch that the first option, due to its simplicity, will be the most widely accepted.

## 3.4 Pro Arguments

### 3.4.1 Economic Diversification

In the status quo, countries in West Africa are highly susceptible to external shocks. A strong manufacturing sector--the key to industrialization--is absent from nearly every West African country. Instead, many countries, such as Nigeria and Ghana, rely heav-ily on the production of food and oil, commodities that suffer from significant price volatility.

Urbanization could play a crucial role in diversifying West African economies. With more young workers in cities looking for jobs, governments are incentivized to invest more heavily in human capital formation. An African Development Bank Group report notes:

> "**The demographic boom and urbanization in West Africa**, coupled with growing demand for more inclusive growth, **are key drivers of economic transformation in the region. Natural resources exploitation is no longer sufficient in order to meet employment and social inclusion expectations, particularly amongst youth. On the back of such pressure, governments are compelled to foster economic diversification centred on job-creating sectors likely to entail human development.** In order to achieve the latter, industrialization, in its manufacturing dimension, is one of the ways forward as detailed in Goal 9 (link is external) of the Sustainable Development Goals adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in September 2015. In the same vein, the new AfDB President, Akinwumi Adesina, set down industri-alization as one of his High Five priorities for Africa."[8]

In addition, growing rates of urbanization could also pave the way for industrial growth. As discussed earlier, urbanization creates economies of agglomeration and a labor force large enough for new factories and production centers to take root. The aforementioned report adds that already:

> "**In 2014, the rebasing of Nigerian GDP revealed that the country was actu-ally experiencing an industrial renewal. With the new computations, the share of manufacturing industries in GDP sharply increased from 2.4% in 2008 to 9% in 2015. Given the predominance of the Nigerian economy in the West African region, these recent developments reflect an increased contribution of non-extractive industries in the entire region.** With Nige-ria, the share of manufacturing industry in the regional GDP increased from 5.9% in 2005 to nearly 9% in 2015. However, when excluding Nigeria, that share decreased from 11.2 % to 8.5% over the same period."[9]

Industrialization would be a boon for job creation, foreign investment, and economic diversification. Indeed, a McKinsey report found:

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[8]https://blogs.afdb.org/measuring-the-pulse-of-economic-transformation-in-west-africa/post/industrialisation-in-west-africa-1-the-current-state-of-affairs-15806

[9]https://blogs.afdb.org/measuring-the-pulse-of-economic-transformation-in-west-africa/post/industrialisation-in-west-africa-1-the-current-state-of-affairs-15806

> "MGI estimates that, by 2025, Africa could nearly double its current manu-facturing output of $500 billion to $930 billion. On current trends, output is set to rise to an estimated $643 billion by 2025. However, $287 billion could be added to that if African countries take decisive action to create an im-proved environment for manufacturers. **The rewards of accelerated indus-trialization would be immense. There would be a positive step change in national wealth, tax receipts, productivity and skills, and balance of pay-ments. An expanded and more productive manufacturing sector could also create six million to 14 million stable jobs over the next decade**, an increase of 5 to 11 percent from 2015."[10]

More broadly, industrialization and economic diversification are widely thought to be prerequisites for sustainable development. As such, finding ways to connect urbaniza-tion to these processes will allow you to access large, long-term impacts.

## 3.4.2 Shifting Away From Agriculture

Global warming will have massive consequences for the region of West Africa. For in-stance, as global temperatures rise, agriculture will become increasingly unprofitable. Already, in Niger, for example, 100,000 hectares of arable land are lost every year,[11] instantaneously threatening the livelihood of countless farmers. In the long term, a sci-entific report shows, "Two meta-analyses estimate that climate change will lead to a mean yield reduction of −8% in all Africa by the 2050 s and −11% in West Africa with-out adaptation."[12] The implication of this is that absent structural changes, millions of farmers will be potentially out of work.

Urbanization, however, could provide rural farmers with employment and en-trepreneurship opportunities in cities. In fact, on an individual basis, migrants tend to do better financially in urban areas, where they have greater access to schools, banks, hospitals, and jobs. Consequently, 82% of people living in extreme poverty in Africa live in rural areas, and in West Africa, specifically, poverty rates are higher in non-urban settings.

In particular, many urban migrants have found success in the informal sector. Fantu Cheru of American University states:

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[10]https://www.mckinsey.com/~/media/McKinsey/Featured%20Insights/Middle%20East%20and%20Africa/Realizing%20the%20 Lions-on-the-Move-2-Executive-summary-September-2016v2.pdf

[11]https://qz.com/africa/1719442/west-africas-sahel-vulnerable-to-climate-change-bad-governance/

[12]https://www.nature.com/articles/s41598-019-49167-0

> "The urban informal sector has become a powerful force for employment creation in virtually all African cities (ILO, 1972; Bromley, 1978: 1033-1039; de Soto, 1989). Although reliable statistics are hard to come by, the propor-tion of the urban labour force employed in the informal sector has increased dramatically since the economic crisis of the 1980s. The urban poor are orga-nizing themselves to meet their shelter needs, mobilize funds to build roads, clinics, and their own rotating credit systems to start up a whole range of businesses in spite of the fact that formal municipal regulations try to out-law these activities. Through collective action, the losers in global restructur-ing attempt to rewrite the rules governing urban political economy in their favour."[13]

In many ways, this argument is intertwined with the first argument I presented regard-ing economic diversification. In both cases, urbanization could serve as a powerful tool to combat structural challenges facing West African economies.

An advantage of running an economic argument is that you can generate lots of inter-active weighing. The state of a country's economy has profound implications on other issues from political stability to public health to terrorism to climate change. As such, make sure to think about how arguments in the economic realm relate with other com-mon arguments on the topic.

## 3.5 Con Arguments

### 3.5.1 Pandemics

Rapid urban growth can increase the prevalence and spread of deadly diseases. Espe-cially in West Africa, where public services and hospitals tend to be underdeveloped, cities can be hotbeds for outbreaks. A WHO report reveals:

> "Many African cities now have an increasing number of overcrowded, in-formal settlements, or 'shanty towns', characterized by low-grade housing, poor roads, inadequate water supplies, sanitation, and waste management services. Most people who live here have no access to running water and store drinking water in containers which often serve as breeding sites for the

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[13]https://www.international.ucla.edu/cnes/article/107324

mosquito Aedes aegypti, the primary vector of urban yellow fever. In addi-tion, the lack of public sanitation services in many large cities prevent the removal of other artificial breeding sites such as metal cans, tires or derelict vehicles. As a result of the increased virus circulation in West Africa and intense population migration from infected forest areas to urban settings, five large cities have already faced yellow fever epidemics in the past four years. Many smaller cities are still exposed to the disease. Over the last 10 years, there has been an increase in the number of countries reporting yel-low fever to WHO, especially in West Africa where 93 % of the countries notified cases in the past 4 years, a 30% increase compared to the period 1995-1999. This reveals a worrying increase in the circulation of the virus in a non-immune human population. The geographical spread of the virus is also disconcerting. Indeed, multiple outbreaks may occur simultaneously in several different places, stressing the response capacity of the country as well as the support capabilities of the international community."[14]

Due to global interconnectedness, a virus could quickly spread across borders. Many West African countries lack highly developed early detection infrastructure, magnifying the risk of cross-border transmission. A WHO report confirms:

"West Africa is characterized by a high degree of population movement across exceptionally porous borders. Recent studies estimate that popula-tion mobility in these countries is seven times higher than elsewhere in the world. To a large extent, poverty drives this mobility as people travel daily looking for work or food. Many extended West African families have rela-tives living in different countries. Population mobility created two signifi-cant impediments to control. First, as noted early on, cross-border contact tracing is difficult. Populations readily cross porous borders but outbreak re-sponders do not. Second, as the situation in one country began to improve, it attracted patients from neighbouring countries seeking unoccupied treat-ment beds, thus reigniting transmission chains. In other words, as long as one country experienced intense transmission other countries remained at risk, no matter how strong their own response measures had been."[15]

These outbreaks put countless lives at risk. The Ebola virus, for example, killed more

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[14]https://www.who.int/csr/disease/yellowfev/urbanoutbreaks/en/

[15]https://www.who.int/news-room/spotlight/one-year-into-the-ebola-epidemic/
factors-that-contributed-to-undetected-spread-of-the-ebola-virus-and-impeded-rapid-containment

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than 5,000 people in West Africa.[16] By disrupting supply chains and hurting investor confidence, outbreaks can also have severe economic consequences. Oyewale Tomori of the Nigerian Academy of Science writes:

> "Unless this situation changes, it will not be long until Africa again calls for assistance, Tomori predicted."**Ebola or some other disease will continue to destroy the very foundations of our socioeconomic structure and orderly development, as it is currently doing in Guinea, Liberia, and Sierra Leone,**" he warned."[17]

Clearly, the impacts of a pandemic are wide-ranging. As such, this argument will allow for direct interaction with various impacts on the affirmative side. Furthermore, given the ongoing impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic, epidemiological arguments could be easier than ever for the average judge to understand and believe.

## 3.5.2 Terrorism

Unchecked urbanization can lead to large populations in small areas that are relatively underdeveloped. Critically, however, there are only so many jobs available in urban centers. As a result, in some cases, many will struggle to find employment in cities, po-tentially forcing populations to engage in illicit activities. Mark Wentling of the Foreign Service Journal elaborates:

> "Further, a rapid population growth rate and a youthful population struc-ture (on the average, one-half of the population is about 15 years old or younger) complicate a progressive erosion of livelihoods. Fast urbanization is also a demographic feature that sets off some alarm bells. Underlying the worrisome demographics of the Sahel is a relatively high and unsustain-able total fertility rate. **The current and projected demographic landscape contributes heavily to the deep poverty of the region and its fragility.One commonly voiced fear is that a large number of disaffected and unem-ployed youth will be attracted to violent extremist groups, thus becoming tomorrow's foot soldiers for these groups. Large portions of the popula-tion who have never benefited from their respective national governments**

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[16]https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4954525/
[17]https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK401927/

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**and those who view their government officials as corrupt elitists might also be easily swayed by what the extremists have to offer.**"[18]

On a similar note, terrorists commonly exploit the fact that urban dwellers lack access to basic services--a phenomenon ubiquitous in West Africa. In exchange for loyalty, extremist groups may offer protection.

Ongoing trends support these claims, as terrorism in West Africa has worsened as of recent. A UN report finds:

> "The UNOWAS chief elaborated on terrorist-attack casualties in Burkina Faso Mali and Niger, which have leapt five-fold since 2016 – with more than 4,000 deaths reported in 2019 alone as compared to some 770 three years earlier."Most significantly," he said, "the geographic focus of terrorist attacks has shifted eastwards from Mali to Burkina Faso and is increasingly threatening West African coastal States"."[19]

Terrorism disrupts trade, sparks conflict, and undermines effective governance. As such, tapping into this argument could be strategic in gaining access to a variety of impacts.

Overall, it's likely many affirmative teams will read cases focused on economic devel-opment. Accordingly, negative teams should consider picking arguments that directly counter economic growth. Pandemics and terrorism are two examples of arguments that could do this effectively.

## 3.6 Ending Thoughts

I'll offer two final thoughts.

First, the breadth of literature on this topic is fantastic (you can read arguments about urbanization in 17 separate countries!). As a result, there will likely be a multitude of arguments available on both sides. If it becomes overly difficult to block out every argument, consider crafting cases built upon impacts that you believe can outweigh the majority of other impacts.

Second, while researching this topic, it might feel tempting to generalize certain claims. However, I want to underscore the fact that Africa--as you can probably tell by now--is

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[18]https://www.afsa.org/slaughter-south-sahara-no-scope-business-usual
[19]https://news.un.org/en/story/2020/01/1054981

extraordinarily diverse in geography, politics, culture, and more. It will be important, therefore, to strike a balance between generating arguments that apply to West Africa as a whole and avoiding unfairly characterizing the continent, or in this case, an area of the continent, as a singular.

Happy debating!

# 4 Topic Analysis by Anik Sen

*Anik Sen debated for The Quarry Lane School in Dublin, California. He served as Public Forum Captain his junior year and Team Captain his senior year. He has reached late out rounds at MineApple, Alta, ASU, Emory, and Berkeley. His career on the national circuit spanned all four years of high school, graduating with 10 career bids. Anik currently attends Duke University as a freshman.*

## 4.1 Introduction

Hey everyone! The February topic, Resolved: On balance, the benefits of urbanization in West Africa outweigh the harms.

### 4.1.1 Background

Urbanization can be described as the process in which people come together to work in large numbers in cities. This process has been occurring at incredible high rates in Africa, due to large rates of rural to urban migration. In fact, the number of people projected to live in urban areas is projected to grow from 36 percent in 2010 to 50 percent in 2030.[1] This massive urbanization occurring can bring poverty reduction and wealth to a country, but it can also lead to increased inequality and the proliferation of poor neighborhoods.

West Africa has been experiencing intense urbanization for over 50 years. In 1950, there were only a 7.5% of rate of urbanization with an increase to 31% by 2000 alone.[2] The majority of this urbanization happens in coastal states with inner, land locked states seeing lower rates of urbanization.

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[1] https://www.worldbank.org/en/events/2015/06/01/urbanization-in-africa-trends-promises-and-challenges
[2] https://www.oecd.org/swac/publications/48231121.pdf

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As West Africa continues to urbanize and make new plans to continue to expand and grow, it is important to take a look at how urbanization has helped West Africa take a key step into becoming a larger trade and economic partner with the world, but the negative effects that stem from rapid urbanization should not be overlooked.

## 4.2 Aff Arguments

### 4.2.1 Economic Benefits

Urbanization can lead to many economic benefits. In fact, one could find many good arguments for economic benefits simply by looking in an economics textbook. While that is not a bad option, looking for economic benefits tied to West Africa specifically is going to be a lot stronger in a debate round. For example, this piece of evidence talks about the benefits of urbanization:

> Urbanization can and should be a driving force in tackling inequality. Cities are engines of economic growth. They are responsible for producing 80 per-cent of the world's GDP and can help pull people out of poverty. Thanks to their greater access to health care infrastructure, sanitation facilities, clean water, and higher literacy rates, cities have lower infant mortality rates. They are places of opportunity where innovations are sparked and scaled.[3]

While this is good rhetoric talking about the possible benefits of urbanization, it lacks specificity about West Africa, making it hard to extrapolate possible links from this piece of evidence. Instead, here is a better piece of evidence:

> The findings indicate that, urbanization contributes positively to economic performance in West Africa and as such it represents a crucial component for the performance of West African emerging economies. While the paper shows that urbanization does matter in West Africa, this may have been in-duced by the fact that the urban centres in these economies are their commer-cial nerve centres which contribute to their prosperity and thus makes the re-gression result not too surprising. Whereas the result suggests that, the role of urbanization cannot be overemphasised, the sustainable management of

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[3]https://www.fordfoundation.org/just-matters/equals-change-blog/posts/habitat-iii-urbanization-can-be-a-force-for-tackling-inequality/

urbanization in order to reap maximum benefits is of topical relevance to West Africa's macroeconomic performance.[4]

This evidence talks specifically about West Africa and how urbanization in these coun-tries is a crucial component for the performance of the emerging markets coming out of Africa. There are many more pieces of evidence that talk about Africa but it is important to continue the link chain and not stop at these pieces of evidence alone. When writing a full argument about the economic benefits of urbanization, be specific in the argumen-tation of what is being benefitted. For example, the emerging markets of Africa could be a good place to find specificity about benefits of urbanization.

### 4.2.2 Concentration of Resources

Urbanization is a process that brings millions of people together into one city. This mas-sive migration that has been occurring in West Africa over many years has brough the concentration and consolidation of resources. This can bring about efficiency in many ways. By consolidating resources into one area, it allows for more efficient distribution of goods and resources. Rather than having to cater to people all across the country in many different rural areas, the government is able to direct resources to specific areas.

Another reason for the consolidation of resources is also for safety. With the prevalence of terrorist groups like Boko Haram in the West African region, protection against ter-rorism is a benefit of urbanization.

> Whilst governments protect their officials from terrorism relatively well in urban areas, this is perhaps less the case for rural areas. It seems that police and governmental targets are not in relatively high risk of experiencing at-tacks in urban areas, but do they enjoy enough protection in more remote areas?[5]

The lack of protection in rural areas makes it more susceptible to attacks and other types of danger. Thus, the consolidation of resources caused by urbanization can help make it easier for the government to protect its citizens.

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[4]https://www.researchgate.net/publication/294385090_Urbanisation_and_Economic_Performance_in_West_Africa
[5]http://www.michael-findley.com/uploads/2/0/4/5/20455799/kaisasteve_v1.pdf

### 4.2.3 Gender Equality

Urbanization is often linked to greater gender equality due to the presence of more working opportunities outside of the household that usually do not exist in rural areas. More job opportunities along with better standards and availability of public amenities have helped cement the women's role in the economy.

> Women are greatest asset of economy. They can contribute to economic sustainability if provided equal access to resources in urbanised economies. Women are now the emerging resource in 21 st century and economies are in-dispensable to flourish by empowering women in modern technology world. In urban areas women have learn to utilize their socioeconomic resources to develop their business, though contributing less but potentially

The importance of women in the economy cements their role as powerful economic forces in the future. The key to economic stability is providing the resources for these women to achieve their potential and urbanization only helps to further that goal.

### 4.2.4 New Markets

With the flow of millions of people into one city, new markets are constantly being cre-ated. Not only does the influx of people into one area create the opportunity for local entrepreneurs to have a larger consumer base to start their businesses, it also provides new markets for current businesses to pivot towards. In fact, these new emerging mar-kets can be the sources of new economic growth that doesn't exist elsewhere.

> And many middle-tier emerging-market cities, however attractive, may be unfamiliar. Take Foshan, Porto Alegre, and Surat—cities that are unlikely to be high on the priority lists of global executives, though each has more than four million inhabitants, fast growth, and a vibrant base of consumers. In-deed, each of these cities will contribute more to global growth than Madrid, Milan, or Zurich. And they are far from isolated examples. Our research in-dicates that 440 emerging-market cities, very few of them "megacities," will account for close to half of expected global GDP growth between 2010 and 2025 (Exhibit 1). Crafting and implementing strategies that emphasize such cities will require new attention from senior leaders, new organizational structures that take account of urban rather than just regional or national

markets, and potentially difficult choices about which activities to scale back elsewhere to free up resources for new thrusts.[6]

These economic opportunities that pop up in these new cities across West Africa have the population and resources, due to urbanization, that make it ripe for foreign invest-ment. This investment can be critical to transforming emerging markets into thriving ones.

> FDI imports capital, but at a later stage capital is repatriated through profit remittance or project discontinuation – and in this way, the host country pays for the costs of capital. However, FDI capital is appreciated by hosts because it tends to be less volatile then other forms of capital inflow (UN 1999, chap 6). FDI creates employment, especially if it is invested in Green-field operations. Moreover, additional jobs may be created in local suppli-ers. Yet FDI may also crowd out local firms that use more labour-intensive methods of production and thus more employment. The policy-relevant net-employment effect is thus hard to assert (Dunning 1993, chap 13, UN 1999, chap 9). In the case of acquisitions, the employment effect is even harder to assert because it requires an analysis of what would have happened to the local firm if it had not been taken over by the foreign investor (Estrin and Meyer 2004). FDI increases gross domestic investment, yet part of it may be domestically funded or the capital inflow may increase the exchange rate and thus costs of international borrowing; both effects can lead to crowd-ing out of local investment. FDI generates exports. Yet FDI also generates imports, especially in the case of market-seeking FDI and in the case of out-sourcing operations that process imported components. MNE are typically more internationally oriented, but this affects both sales and procurement. Thus, the net effect of the trade balance may be much smaller than data on exports by FDI may suggest (UN 1999, chap 8).

### 4.2.5 Economic Improvement

With urbanization comes the development of cities and new infrastructure to house the millions of migrants moving into these cities. The development of this new infrastruc-ture can have many economic benefits.

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[6]https://www.mckinsey.com/featured-insights/urbanization/unlocking-the-potential-of-emerging-market-cities

Rapid urbanization in developing countries, and continued urbanization in advanced economies, will be the biggest driver of infrastructure spending over the next few decades. Today, 3.5 billion, 50% of the world's population, live in cities. By 2030 that will have risen to 5 billion, 60% of the popula-tion. This rise will require sustained infrastructure investment in railroads, highways, bridges, ports, airports, water, power, energy and telecommu-nications, creating massive opportunities for multinational contractors and their international and local suppliers[7].

The massive amount of infrastructure projects that appear all over West Arica as cities continue to grow create job opportunities for those moving to the city. After creating the infrastructure, it help promote economic interests and social amenities that will con-tinue to be important for the quality of life for its citizens.

## 4.3 Neg Arguments

### 4.3.1 Air Pollution

Urbanization usually brings the production of factories and heavy machinery that pro-duce a lot of pollution in the air.

Explosive population growth, urbanization and a growing economy have put the environment in West Africa under a lot of stress. The World Health Organization (WHO) estimates that each year, around seven million people die from the effects of polluted air. Each time people breathe in, they inhale an average of 500 ml of air. A healthy adult at rest takes about 8 million breaths per year, hence inhaling 4 million litres of air. Children inhale more air than adults do, relative to body surface area, breathing frequency, and heart rate.[8]

With more urbanization to occur, the increasing population density along with worse air pollution could contribute to millions of new deaths in the coming years.

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[7]https://www.citigroup.com/citi/citiforcities/pdfs/Urbanization_A_Major_Driver_of_Infrastructure_Spending.pdf
[8]https://www.ecmwf.int/en/about/media-centre/science-blog/2019/air-west-africa-breathes

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### 4.3.2 Housing Crisis

When millions flock to the urban cities in West Africa, there becomes a housing crisis that emerges. There is a shortage of affordable housing for new migrants thar move to these urban areas in search of work. Unfortunately, barriers like the fast pace at which mi-gration is happening and other regulatory restrictions are hampering the government's ability to continue to provide affordable housing to those that need it the most.

> For all the evidence of booming construction in Africa's growing cities, affordable housing needs remain difficult to meet because of the pace of migration, the difficult economics, the complex risk involved in providing housing for the poorest urban newcomers, and the host of land tenure laws (which govern how land is owned, transferred, and used) and regulatory re-strictions that constrain rapid construction of sustainable housing solutions. These last constraints can be taken up urgently by African technocrats to remove legal and zoning barriers to urban housing development, paving the way for the substantial investments required to address the housing shortfall and keep up with projected demand. The simple necessity of addressing the looming crisis may stimulate innovative approaches to financing urban housing development. That will only happen, however, if leaders set the stage for success.[9]

Without solving the housing crises that exists already, it is going to be hard for Aff teams to argue about the economic benefits that urbanization is supposed to bring. There needs to be a clear focus on the workers that are key to creating economic growth to ensure there isn't a massive crash due to overcrowding and a lack of housing.

### 4.3.3 Disease

There are many causes of disease that are rooted in practices caused by urbanization. The massive flow of migration that capitulate into slums in West Africa creates many different avenues for disease to spread.

> According to World Bank urban specialist Somik Lall, African cities share
> three features that frustrate their development. They are crowded "but not

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[9]https://www.thinkglobalhealth.org/article/africas-urban-housing-crisis

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economically dense". That means low investment in infrastructure, busi-ness, and affordable housing. It's an urbanisation of people, not capital. Asian cities have ploughed double the rate of investment into roads, sew-erage, policing, and healthcare than African countries have achieved over the past four decades. African cities are also disconnected. They are col-lections of small, fragmented neighbourhoods poorly served by unreliable transportation. New development expands the margins of the cities, but poor roads makes commuting a test of resolve, reducing workers' access to job opportunities.[10]

These factors that cause low economic growth prevent rsidents from accessing the eco-nomic benefits that urbanization was supposed to bring and rather, they feel the effects of the population migration and density ensuing from that. Low growth also prevents access to food and health services and the prescence of the informal economy in these areas prevents the government form having the resources to fix it.

Low growth means urban-dwellers pay a third more for food than other low- and middle-income regions of the world, and through the nose for most other goods and services as well. The degree to which private business has to be self-sufficient "in terms of providing the power, transport, and security services that local and national authorities should, is often not fully under-stood," a Zimbabwean research team points out. This drives up their costs and reduces profitability. The size of the informal economy far outstrips the formal sector, allowing people to scrape a living. Places like Mukuru are bustling with trade and artisanal services. But although the informal econ-omy employs on average 60 percent of the urban workforce, it accounts for less than one quarter of economic growth, according to the Zimbabwean researchers. The informal economy is a survival strategy. It disguises unem-ployment, essentially acting as a safety net. It typically doesn't generate the public revenue required to address the needs of cities, and as a result the au-thorities tend to either ignore it, or periodically crackdown on its activities.[11]

Along with these factors that are preventing the economic growth reaching the citizens, the migration patterns are also a new source of disease.

Rapid urbanisation, particularly in developing nations of Asia and Africa,

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[10]https://www.thenewhumanitarian.org/opinion/2017/12/11/african-cities-time-urgent-reform
[11]https://www.thenewhumanitarian.org/opinion/2017/12/11/african-cities-time-urgent-reform

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is creating fluid relationships between urban and rural environments with populations drawn to new types of suburban settlements on the periphery of cities. These might be in the shape of suburban neighbourhoods, infor-mal self-built settlements, refugee camps, or communities of workers living near mines or factories. These suburban and 'peri-urban' areas are more likely than cities to be the source of new and reemerging infectious diseases, the study explains. They are particularly vulnerable to diseases that jump the animal-to-human boundary (zoonosis), as they bring populations of hu-mans and livestock into contact with displaced wildlife in a manner that does not happen in cities. They are often densely populated, poorly planned, lack-ing health infrastructure and out of sight of government authorities. Signifi-cantly for public health policy, they also serve as a conduit between city and countryside -- making municipal, regional and even national boundaries ef-fectively "porous."[12]

With the effects of the last pandemic still visible around the world, creating new path-ways for diseases to spread and evolve is only more dangerous.

### 4.3.4 Problems Caused By Lack of Economic Growth

Current cities benefiting from the expansion in migration due to urbanization are not doing as well as many think. Although playing a large role in their national economies, these capital cities in West Africa are still lagging behind other African countries as true drivers of economic growth.

> "Despite their importance to the national economy, Bamako, Niamey and Conakry are not true drivers of growth: in the three cities, labor productivity, calculated as gross value added (GVA) per capita, is low and has not risen in the last fifteen years, in contrast to the average of 15 other sub-Saharan African cities," said Meskerem Brhane, Task Team Leader of the World Bank urbanization programs in those countries and co-author of the report.[13]

Moreover, the development of infrastructure and industries has not kept pace with the expansion of people into these areas. Many people continue to lack access to necessities

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[12]https://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2020/04/200421112557.htm
[13]https://africabusinesscommunities.com/africadata/urbanization-dampens-growth-opportunities-in-west-africa-world-bank/

and the lack of infrastructure to handle the booming population is becoming evident with the lack of the government to clean up after its citizens.

> Sixty percent of city dwellers in sub-Saharan Africa live in slums, and only 25 percent have access to safe drinking water. Poor sewage systems and weak flood control present another challenge. Kouman Kossia Tamia, a traditional queen from Ivory Coast, fears the floods that come with each rainy season. When the rainy season comes, she said, she cannot do anything because ev-erything is blocked. Amadou Diarra, mayor of North Pikine, a suburb of Senegal's capital, Dakar, sees human waste management as a growing prob-lem. Waste is buried, he said, because there are not plants to deal with it. Instead, there is only one site that receives all the household waste in the Dakar region. The challenge in moving toward sustainability, he said, is to transform waste next to where it is produced, rather than bury it under-ground.[14]

The lack of infrastructure to handle the ever-increasing number of migrants coming into West Africa only pose more problems of overcrowding and an insufficient support system from the government.

## 4.4 Conclusion

This topic seems to have a lot of ground for theoretical arguments about what urbaniza-tion should have created. As typical of topics like these however, it will be important to look at what has already occurred in Africa as the resolution is asking debaters to look at the benefits and harms. Finding arguments that are specific and rooted in specific policies are trends caused by urbanization will have the most success on this topic.

Although there is a lot of ground on both sides on just the topic of urbanization, it is always helpful to dive into the specifics of any topic. For this topic, I would recommend looking at past economic topics like the BRI to see if there are arguments or evidence that could apply to this topic. Does economic linkages between China and West Africa through the BRI pose any significant benefit or harm? There are many different possible links to urbanization so get creative!

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[14]https://www.voanews.com/africa/rapid-urbanization-presents-new-problems-africa

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# 5 Topic Analysis by Lawrence Zhou

*Lawrence Zhou is the Director of Lincoln-Douglas Debate and Publishing at Victory Briefs. He debated at Bartlesville HS in Oklahoma (2010-2014) in Lincoln-Douglas debate where he was the 2014 NSDA Lincoln-Douglas national champion. While attending the University of Oklahoma, he placed as the National Runner Up at the 2018 Intercollegiate Ethics Bowl National Competition, advanced to outrounds at the 2016 and 2018 Cross Examination Debate Association National Tournament, and championed the Beijing Language and Culture University in British parliamen-tary debate. Lawrence graduated in 2019 with degrees in MIS, Marketing, and Phi-losophy. He was formerly the Debate League Director at the National High School Debate League of China and is currently a graduate assistant at the University of Wyoming and an assistant coach at The Harker School. His students have advanced to late outrounds at numerous regional and national invitational tournaments, in-cluding finals and semifinals appearances at the NSDA National Tournament.*

## 5.1 Introduction

This topic is unlike many others because it doesn't ask us to evaluate the costs and bene-fits to adopting a particular policy proposal. Instead, it asks us to evaluate the pros and cons, or benefits and harms, of a trend. On the one hand, I really do like these topics because they deflate the value of narrow or unpredictable advocacies. On many topics, debaters will tend to interpret the topic in ways that artificially limit the debate down to random and unpredictable arguments. With topics that are evaluative, or not asking us to defend a change from the status quo, the value of such arguments is not great because the topic is about holistic evaluation of the benefits and harms. Even if one team comes up with a weird, unpredictable argument, that won't give them as much of a strategic advantage on these types of topics because the other team can always outweigh or prove that the benefits or harms they describe are bigger or more important.

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On the other hand, I find many of these topics a little bit difficult to debate because it is not clear how teams should consider the benefits of urbanization against the harms. One of the reasons for this is because it's not clear what the comparison class is. In other words, it's not obvious what it means for the benefits to outweigh the harms. I think there are at least 2 plausible ways to interpret this topic.

(A) It is the case that urbanization in West Africa as it has played out has benefitted West Africa more than if urbanization had counterfactually not occurred at least at the same rate. Vote pro if true, vote con if false.

(B) It is the case that urbanization in West Africa as it has played out has benefitted West Africa more than some counterfactual world. Vote pro if true, vote con if false.

At first, these seem like really similar statements and that is true – in fact, regardless of which interpretation you adopt, most arguments for both sides will likely be the same. However, I think it does matter at the margins and in the US, oftentimes, those margins matter. For example, interpretation (B) allows the Con to make arguments that say that urbanization in general is good, but that West Africa should've urbanized in a different way. However, interpretation (A) makes those kinds of arguments less strong. That might be a relevant distinction because the reason we're debating about West Africa in particular is because their urbanization is unlike what has happened in other countries. Specifically, the lack of infrastructure in West Africa has created serious downsides to urbanization, notably the rise of slums, or an overcrowded urban area inhabited by poor people. If we're comparing slums to living in rural poverty, the slums are arguably better; if we're comparing slums to no slums, the choice is obvious.

That being said, I suspect these interpretational issues will fall by the wayside in most debates. I guess that most debates will implicitly assume that the debate is mostly a question of whether more urbanization is better than less. The primary reason I bring up this interpretational confusion is because in some rounds, there might be teams that attempt to exploit this ambiguity in ways that give them some small competitive advan-tage. You should be prepared to defend whatever interpretation you have about the topic should teams attempt to interpret the topic in ways that are confusing.

The other thing that matters for this topic is the relevance of examples. I tend to think that examples are both over- and under-utilized in many debate rounds. I think they are over-utilized by teams who think that a single example proves a general trend or a larger claim. For example, proving that a single city in Mali saw incredible economic growth does not, on its own, prove that, on balance, urbanization is good for economic growth.

Likewise, proving that a single city in Niger did not experience economic growth does not prove that, on balance, urbanization does not contribute to economic growth. How-ever, I think that examples are often under-utilized as well. Many teams will assert larger trends but do so using only abstract claims like "Urbanization led to a 34% de-crease in poverty" and then end the argument there. That's not very persuasive to a judge. Examples can help make such abstract claims more salient. An argument like "Urbanization led to a 34% decrease in poverty as proven by several cities in Mali where the number of people who held employment and could educate their children increased" is going to be much more meaningful to a judge. Examples are useful in many circum-stances. The mistake is thinking that they, by themselves, are complete arguments. As a result, I do strongly suggest that debaters research examples of the claims they make. This is especially useful for crossfire where demonstrating one's knowledge of the topic can translate into wins in close rounds.

The rest of this topic introduction will briefly cover the background of the topic before moving on to discuss some thoughts on strategy for the Pro and the Con. As the other Topic Analysis essays have already covered the substantive arguments, I want to briefly cover some of my initial thoughts about argument strategy and preparation as opposed to the content of those arguments.

## 5.2 Background

West Africa is defined by the United Nations as the westernmost region of Africa includ-ing the 16 countries of Benin, Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, The Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Ivory Coast, Liberia, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone and Togo, as well as the United Kingdom Overseas Territory of Saint Helena, As-cension and Tristan da Cunha, although some sources also include Cameroon, Chad, Equatorial Guinea, and the Saharan parts of Mali, Mauritania, and Niger.[1] I am not go-ing to really cover the background of West Africa – instead, I would recommend reading the Wikipedia entry on West Africa because it goes into far more detail than I can here.[2] What's relevant is the rapid urbanization West Africa has experienced in recent years. Urbanization, or the process through which cities grow, and higher and higher per-centages of the population comes to live in the city, has defined much of West Africa's

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[1]https://www.britannica.com/place/western-Africa
[2]https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/West_Africa

development over the last 50 years.[3] This urbanization has not been solely isolated to the growth of large cities like Lago in Nigeria, but also includes the growth of smaller urban centers as more and larger towns arise.[4] This combination of the growth of large coastal cities on the western coast of Africa as well as the rise of towns makes Africa one of the fastest urbanizing regions in the world. The urban population of the continent is expected to triple in the coming years.[5] That makes this topic ripe for discussion – is this incoming wave of urbanization overall good or bad?

To what extent does knowing this background matter? I think it matters but not a lot. It can't hurt to know the details of West Africa's history or geography, but oftentimes these details don't translate into obvious gains in debate rounds. Because of the limited time before the tournaments begin, I would suggest spending more time researching the arguments themselves as opposed to the background. The most that can happen from not knowing a particular background issue is that you'll look a little silly in crossfire. I think your limited pre-tournament prep time is best spent writing up arguments and blocks, so I'll move to discuss some of the main strategic concerns I find interesting on this topic.

## 5.3 Pro Strategy

I'll be honest, I think this topic is fairly biased in favor of the Pro. The main reason for me is that most of the articles that will get cited as Con articles are rarely arguing for the strong conclusion that urbanization is bad – they are mostly saying "There are some downsides to urbanization that we need to be aware of so we can mitigate its risks." You're not going to find many activists, economists, or development experts that claim that urbanization is, on balance, bad (although some do exist). This is not to suggest that the risks associated with urbanization are not important. On the contrary, the Con arguments regarding slums and the lack of infrastructure are very real and many devel-opment experts still are not in agreement how to solve such a difficult problem. But the fact remains that most optimists think those problems can be overcome. This matters for your Pro strategy. If you know that most of the Con articles are written in the context of pointing out some risks of urbanization, then you know 2 things are likely to happen.

**First**, the Con is probably going to try and artificially inflate the risk of their impacts

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[3]https://www.nationalgeographic.org/encyclopedia/urbanization/
[4]https://www.oecd.org/swac/publications/48231121.pdf
[5]https://iopscience.iop.org/article/10.1088/1748-9326/aa94fe

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by trying to get from urbanization to something catastrophic as fast as possible. For example, one common Con argument is that urbanization leads to disease which the Con will immediately try and spin as the cause of the next pandemic. This is dangerous for the Pro and so you need to adjust your strategy accordingly.

**Second**, the Con is going to try and muddle the debate by poking small holes in your case and spinning those as arguments that somehow takeout your entire contention / ar-gument. For example, one of the stronger Pro contentions is just that urbanization has a fairly noticeable impact on reducing poverty, a trend largely recognized in the academic literature. The Con will try and muddy the waters by pointing out single counterex-amples, perhaps casting some skepticism on the studies you cite, or by pointing out some parts of your evidence that might cite other drivers of poverty reduction. Truth-fully, the problem with these responses is that even given their full weight, they don't disprove the initial argument that's being made. For example, it's basically confirmed scientific fact that global climate change is real and anthropogenic (human caused) but that doesn't stop climate skeptics from pointing out irrelevant facts or single counterex-amples, thinking that these somehow disprove the larger claim. But again, even given the full weight of these responses, they just do not scale up to proving that climate change isn't real or anthropogenic. Similarly, pointing out a single city or even a single country in West Africa that didn't see noticeable poverty reduction just doesn't prove that urbanization doesn't, on balance, contribute to poverty reduction. And it certainly doesn't imply that West Africa should not develop.

This has, I think, 3 obvious implications for Pro case writing and block writing strategy.

**First**, you cannot give your opponent's easy places for them to latch on and attack. You should write your case, think about what the most common attacks against your logic and evidence are likely to be, and rewrite your case so that it is no longer susceptible to those attacks. When you pick studies to cite, are you able to explain them easily? Can you explain why the study is a good study? Does the study cover all of West Africa? Why is it able to avoid common criticisms of studies in this area? Does your evidence actually say urbanization is the primary cause of whatever good benefit you claim? One way to prepare for this is simply to have your partner ask you questions about your study for 5-10 minutes and see where possible weak points are. You cannot let your opponents get easy attacks on your logic and evidence.

**Second**, you need to stress the "on balance" nature of this resolution. Do not let the judge decide the debate on small technical details. They need to decide if, on balance, ur-banization's benefits outweigh its cost. This deflates the value of the nitpicky type of ar-

guments because they don't prove that, on balance, urbanization is bad. This shouldn't be repeated too often in a debate, but it is important that it is mentioned at least once in the last speeches. Too often debaters get too lost on the small issues and lose track of the bigger picture. This is especially important when you're Pro. One way to make this clear is by introducing an informal burden somewhere in your case that stresses the "on balance" nature of this topic.

**Third**, you should be prepared to turn as many of the Con's most popular arguments as possible. A turn is an argument that says the opposite is true. Let's take the common argument that urbanization causes disease. You could reply defensively by arguing that urbanization does not cause disease. This is a fine argument. However, you can actually make the disease argument into an offensive argument for the Pro. Instead of saying that urbanization doesn't cause disease, you could argue that urbanization actu-ally *reduces* the risk of disease. Reasons for this could be improved health infrastructure, increased sanitation, and increased health surveillance. Now this takes what was orig-inally an argument for the Con and makes it into an argument for the Pro. The Pro agrees that disease is bad but argues that urbanization actually reduces the incidence of disease which is now a reason why urbanization is good. This puts increased pressure on the Con and also helps negate the value of over-inflated impacts like "disease causes worldwide pandemics." The above example of a link turn is probably not itself a round winner (the literature suggesting that urbanization in developing countries does enable disease spread seems fairly decisive), but coupled with other arguments, could be an important part of your rebuttal strategy.

## 5.4 Con Strategy

As I mentioned earlier, I tend to think that the Pro is probably correct on this topic. It's hard to envision reasons why urbanization is net bad. Imaging trying to tell a poor country in West Africa that they had to stop urbanizing – you'd receive a lot of odd stares. The reason I think it's harder to be Con is because (A) many of the downsides of urbanization are well recognized but are not taken to be reasons urbanization is net bad, just risks that need to be mitigated, and (B) there are very few things you could point to as somehow being uniquely bad about West African urbanization compared to the urbanization of any other region in the world. In fact, the latter reason is one of the reasons I find so many of these arguments to be so unappealing – it sounds almost offensive to imply, for example, that the biggest risk of disease comes from poor people

trying to find better economic prospects in West Africa as opposed to factory farms or urbanization in other regions like Asia.[6]

Nonetheless, I don't think the Con position is unwinnable in any sense. There are many serious risks of urbanization that are often overlooked by laypeople who tend to view urbanization as an unalloyed good for developing countries. The trick will be, I think, not in winning that those risks exist – almost everyone recognizes those risks exist – but in winning that those risks prove that, on balance, the costs of urbanization are greater than its benefits. To that end, I have 3 pieces of advice for Con teams.

**First**, you should try and argue for relatively large impact scenarios. As I mentioned in the Pro section, one of the things that will make the Pro case weaker than it ought to be is that teams will assume that economic development is good in and of itself and won't be prepared to explain why it outweighs the arguments presented by the Con. The two main impacts that Con teams will probably want to discuss will be related to disease and the environment. It is very easy to explain how disease is bad (although some significant portion of Americans probably won't agree) because it leads to deaths and how hurting the environment results in a concrete harm to people. The main problem with these arguments is really that urbanization in West Africa isn't going to be the sole cause of these harms but pointing that out in a debate round isn't easy. Consequently, it is strategic for Con teams to stress how important and big their impacts are relative to the Pro's impacts.

**Second**, you should write in-depth and technical blocks against Pro teams. Many Pro teams will likely assume that their opponents will not contest the economy arguments in great depth. I predict that most Con teams will simply write a generic "AT: Economy" block, with maybe a little subdivision for things like "Poverty Reduction" or "Foreign Aid." However, I suspect many Con teams will not get into the weeds on the specific warrants like the ones I mentioned above. It might be tedious (it will be tedious), but I think it will pay off to have very specific answers to very specific warrants that cite lots of evidence. This is something that I think a lot of Pro teams won't be as prepared to answer compared to a more generic "AT: Economy" block and I think will help you stand out against a very large field. I think these should be a combination of great inde-pendent reasons why the economy argument fails or even supports the Con, e.g. slums, infrastructure, and stats about poverty, as well as specific refutations to particular claims made by the Pro.

**Third**, I suggest spending time casting skepticism about small details in the debate. This

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[6]https://theweek.com/articles/457135/5-modern-diseases-grown-by-factory-farming

should by no means be the bulk of your strategy, but as I mentioned earlier, teams tend to get very lost in the weeds of specific arguments, losing sight of the bigger picture. This myopic view of debate rounds sometimes helps debaters make sure they don't drop arguments but tends to hurt teams who forget that the topic is asking about the topic "on balance." Muddying the debate a little helps bog down the Pro as they are now forced to make arguments that don't really help them the debate round. For example, questioning the credibility about a specific study in the Pro case takes only a few seconds but forces the Pro to spend time defending the credibility of their study. Again, this should not form any significant part of your Con strategy, but it is something to keep in mind.

## 5.5 Conclusion

I hope this topic introduction was helpful! Because this topic is relatively complex and the literature in-depth, this topic will reward debaters who simply know more about the topic, perhaps more than other topics where there were only a few major arguments that you could get really practiced at defending even if you didn't know all the details behind those arguments. I think this topic, because of how little most of us knew about it prior to researching the topic, will reward topic knowledge more than clever tricks (although you should never underestimate the role of those clever tricks).

Good luck!

# 6 Definitions

**Definitions of various terms**

**Barofsky et al. 16**

Jeremy Barofsky (Non-resident Fellow – Governance Studies at Brookings), Eye-rusalem Siba (Former Brookings Expert), and Jonathan Grabinsky (Consultant at the World

Bank), "Can rapid urbanization in Africa reduce poverty? Causes, opportunities, and policy recommendations," Brookings, September 7, 2016,

https://www.brookings.edu/blog/africa-in-focus/2016/09/07/can-rapid-urbanization-in-africa-reduce-poverty-causes-opportunities-and-policy-recommendations/

Urbanization refers to the proportion of people living in urban areas. Urban slum dwelling refers to the proportion of the urban population living in slum households, where a slum household is defined as a group of individuals living under the same roof lacking one or more of the following conditions: access to improved water, access to improved sanitation, sufficient living area, and durability of housing. Urban improved sanitation refers to the percentage of the urban population using improved sanitation facilities. Improved sanitation facilities are likely to ensure hygienic separation of hu-man excreta from human contact, and include flush/pour flush (to piped sewer system, septic tank, pit latrine), ventilated improved pit (VIP) latrine, pit latrine with slab, and composting toilet. Total fertility rate refers to the number of births a woman would have if she passed through her childbearing years having children according to the current level of age-specific of fertility rates. We calculated total fertility as a percent of sub-Saharan Africa's by dividing the total fertility rates of each region by the total fertility rates of sub-Saharan Africa.

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# 7 Pro Evidence

## 7.1 Climate Change

### 7.1.1 Density

**Urbanization helps <u>rethink cities</u>, reducing pollution.**

**Pinault 20**

Nicolas Pinault (journalist for Voice of America). "Rapid Urban Growth in Africa Poses Challenges ." *Voice of America*, February 07, 2020. https://www.voanews.com/africa/rapid-urban-growth-africa-poses-challenges

Many activists see this growing urbanization as a tremendous opportunity to rethink African cities, which some say are overrun by cars and pollution, with road safety being a major issue.

Wanjira Mathai is the vice-president and regional director for Africa at the World Re-sources Institute, based in Nairobi.

"We must begin to think about mass transit. What are the opportunities for buses and non-motorized transit, like bike lanes and simple walk paths?" Mathai said. "Pedes-trians in our city is one of the most depressive things. If you just walk around Nairobi, you would find in some paths, very pleasant walk path, and then abruptly they end and you're walking in the middle of the road competing with trucks and buses."

The new report said Africa now has 74 urban agglomerations or urban areas with more than one million inhabitants, about the same as the European Union and United States combined.

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## 7.1.2 Green Cities

**West African urbanization creates an opportunity for Green Cities, a new model for sustainable and resilient development.**

### Badara 18

Alé Badara SY (Urban planner, Senior Green City development Specialist, Global Green Growth Institute (GGGI),

Dakar, Senegal). "Green cities, a new model for a sustainable, resilient, inclusive and prosperous city." *Afrik 21*,

November 7, 2018,

https://www.afrik21.africa/en/green-cities-a-new-model-for-a-sustainable-resilient-inclusive-and-prosperous-city/

The green city as a model for a sustainable city

At this stage, it will be difficult to address the challenges of growth and poverty in African cities in general and Senegal in particular, without sustainable urbanization management. Current urbanization models are no longer viable. They increase the costs of upgrading cities and do not allow us to take better advantage of the economic and social dividends of our cities. The sustainable city is an essential objective. It em-phasizes the need to change paradigm and opt for another model of urban development that is inclusive, soberer, sparing in land resources and giving more space to renewable energies and energy efficiency.

In this light, the "green cities" model is particularly relevant in Senegal's context, as it offers the best options for addressing climate change through sustainable mitigation and adaptation measures through job creation, poverty alleviation and the improvement of living conditions for the well-being of populations.

The development of green cities goes beyond traditional environmental policy, in that it uses sustainable urban planning tools and practical experiences. Green cities thus aim to accelerate the transition to low-carbon urban development in order to transform en-vironmental and energy constraints into economic opportunities. It is an ecosystemic and integrated approach based on dialogue and consultation in order to develop com-pact, resilient and low-carbon cities that consume less space, less energy, less water, less natural resources and produce less waste.

The green city development process thus aims to shift to a new model of sustainable, resilient, inclusive and prosperous cities. It provides solutions to the challenges of ur-banization through the promotion of a sustainable urban model that meets climate chal-

lenges, combining quality of life, energy, environmental and economic performance.

Green cities aim at functional mix, the promotion of energy efficiency and the use of renewable energies, sustainable land management, environmentally friendly transport, waste recovery… supported by green and inclusive governance.

The objective is to create a better living environment, control urban sprawl on agricul-tural land, access to various energy sources and basic urban services related to water, sanitation, housing, health, improving the quality of services provided to citizens and finally creating conditions for balanced economic growth.

### 7.1.3 Green Cities – Senegal

**Senegal provides a model.**

**Badara 18**

Alé Badara SY (Urban planner, Senior Green City development Specialist, Global Green Growth Institute (GGGI),

Dakar, Senegal). "Green cities, a new model for a sustainable, resilient, inclusive and prosperous city." *Afrik 21*,

November 7, 2018,

https://www.afrik21.africa/en/green-cities-a-new-model-for-a-sustainable-resilient-inclusive-and-prosperous-city/

Kolda, Tivaouane and Diamniadio, pioneers of the green city

The "green cities" model as advocated by GGGI is the one that ensures not only envi-ronmental sustainability, but also economic growth and inclusive social development, which contributes to the economy of an entire region and country.

The Green Secondary Cities Development Programme aims to provide these localities with strategic planning tools focused on green growth in order to strengthen territorial resilience, develop climate governance capacities and mobilise resources for financing bankable projects. For the first phase of the programme's implementation, the cities of Kolda, Tivaouane and the new city Diamniadio were the pilot cities.

In Kolda, the Green City Development Strategy is part of an overall perspective that takes into account the need to develop an intermunicipal system in order to meet the city's spatial development constraints. The roadmap focuses on Kolda's strategic pri-orities in terms of housing, transport, sanitation, and indicates the need for structural urban policies to give the city a new life and boost its economy.

In Tivaouane, the Development Strategy is based on the principles of sustainable devel-opment for the city's influence beyond the country's borders, while consolidating its religious functions. The roadmap focuses on the establishment of an integrated liquid and solid sanitation management system.

At the Diamniadio level, the strategy will be intended to place the development of the Urban Pole within a green trajectory. It will be a powerful territorial marketing tool, which can contribute to the cluster's attractiveness and attract more international in-vestors.

As Kolda, Tivaouane and the Diamniadio Urban Pole, the other Programme cities will receive technical support from GGGI Senegal to develop and implement a Green City

Development Strategy and a corresponding Roadmap.

Build real decentralised territorial projects

The lessons learned from the pilot phase led to the extension of the Programme to ten new cities. The implementation approach of this phase aims to strengthen citizen par-ticipation, ownership of actors and stimulate a dynamic of behavior change. To support this process, it is planned to set up a " Green City Young Volunteers Network " in each city, building on the existing network of associations, in order to raise awareness of the need to change behavior.

In the context of Phase 2 of Act 3 of Decentralization, it is necessary to capitalize this approach and tools developed under the Programme to make them relevant "Territorial Projects", aimed to strengthen green and inclusive economic growth in secondary cities.

Finally, green cities are accompanied by a set of services, economic opportunities and green jobs that contribute significantly to the Country's green growth.

## 7.1.4 Grid

### New urbanization creates the opportunity to incorporate renewables into the grid

### Amoo 20

Franklin Olakunle Amoo (co-founder of Baylis Emerging Markets, an Africa focused in-vestment firm). "Re-Imagining The African City:

Sustainability, Logistics & Prosperity." *Forbes*, November 8, 2020,

https://www.forbes.com/sites/franklinamoo/2020/11/08/re-imagining-the-african-city-geography-logistics--prosperity/?sh=e1776663675c

Power provision to this growing Africa is a key element to the re-think of urban devel-opment. Distributed grid systems, while unlikely to provide a full replacement of tra-ditional centralized grids, will feature in Africa's growth like they have nowhere else in the world. If only because Africa's grid system is already so woefully underdeveloped and will not be prepared to handle the rapid expansion in population and urbaniza-tion. The same factors create a tremendous opportunity to incorporate low and zero emissions renewable feedstock technologies to power these varied and distributed grid networks. With proper foresight and focus, Africa could leapfrog the modern urban power grid and find itself with a more resilient and secure power portfolio.

# 7.2 Conflict

## 7.2.1 Growth

**Economic growth and regional linkages through urbanization relax long simmering regional and ethnic tensions.**

### Amoo 20

Franklin Olakunle Amoo (co-founder of Baylis Emerging Markets, an Africa focused in-vestment firm). "Re-Imagining The African City:

Sustainability, Logistics & Prosperity." *Forbes*, November 8, 2020,

https://www.forbes.com/sites/franklinamoo/2020/11/08/re-imagining-the-african-city-geography-logistics--prosperity/?sh=e1776663675c

Adding balance to national distributions of prosperity and economic progress through either the rehabilitation of heritage cities or the establishment of purpose-built munic-ipalities could also potentially relax long simmering regional and ethnic tensions in many African nations. Hastily drawn borders alternately dividing and agglomerat-ing ancient nations has created enormous social tensions and competition for political power and resources along ethnic and nationality lines in countries that are, in truth, often a forced consolidation of many distinct – and ancient - underlying nationalities. Developing interconnected regional centers of excellence around revived or intention-ally established new cities could help soothe frictions by better distributing economic activity within countries.

Within these new and revived cities, Africa's planners should organize the physical space to promote growth. Promising planned cities such as Diamniadio Lake City, Cen-tenary City and Mwale Medical Technological City are already underway. However, these planned cities are largely focused on luxury amenity living. Additional projects should be initiated focused on industrial activity and production. Intentional spatial planning to support specific economic activities was always an essential feature of clas-sical African cities. Benin, Djenne, Great Zimbabwe and others tended to divide munic-ipalities into quarters reserved for specific guilds such as bronzeworkers or carpenters. Manufacturing has always been geographically concentrated – Bavaria and the mittel-stand, Manchester and the textile mills, Shenzen and the Chinese factory revolution; it has always been useful to minimize transport costs and encourage the co-mingling of people and ideas. Modern urban planners in Africa should borrow from this tradition and from the success experienced by some planned cities in developing Asia. Africa's

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priority sectors of manufacturing, agricultural processing and mineral beneficiation are all industries in which minimizing the geographic distance within the supply chain is of critical importance. Anchoring regions with large endowments of a critical resource – such as tin or manganese mines, natural confluences of large navigable rivers or partic-ularly fertile land – would be a catalyst to creating natural destinations for job seekers and young people seeking to establish a life.

### 7.2.2 Integration

**Turn --- urbanization creates new opportunities for social and cultural integration – that fosters inclusion and reduces conflict.**

**Africa.com 20**

Africa.com (media company providing coverage on topics such financial, political and cultural news related to Africa). "Pros & Cons of the Rapid Growth of African Cities," *Africa.com*, published 2020, https://africa.com/pros-cons-of-the-rapid-growth-of-african-cities/

Opportunities for Social and Cultural Integration

Most African countries are largely divided among ethnocultural and religious lines. Ur-banisation is bringing people from different ethnocultural backgrounds and different religious beliefs, who have a common goal of economic pursuits, from rural areas to urban centres, and, in the process of attaining economic pursuits, they learn to live with people of other beliefs. Large cities are mostly places where cultural diversity flour-ishes. African cities are there to exemplify the cultural, social, and religious diversity that is seen as fundamental characteristics of countries that will develop economically and socially in an era when the global world is interdependent. While on economic pursuit, integration occurs in workplaces, schools, neighbourhoods, streets, shopping malls, and soccer fields.

These African cities are like focal points in these developing countries in which adapta-tion to new ways, new consumption, new technology and production patterns, as well as new social institutions could be evolved. Historically, cities have been the seats of learning and education; cities have been the centres of governmental and administra-tive organizations, and they have also performed the function of cultural or religious rallying points. Innovations through partnerships and interdependence of various cul-tural groups in cities have contributed immensely to improving the quality of life of urban populations and to enhance the critical and catalytic roles of urban centres in ru-ral development and transformation. With sustained urban-rural links, a development pipeline will flow from both sides, thereby making them interdependent in numerous ways.

Even though in some South African cities we have cultural discrimination in the form of xenophobia resulting in violence, these should be seen as early challenges that cities will face in integrating as a result of unequal economic growth. Most South African cities are

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still very much diverse. Diversity is not sufficient enough to bring sustained inclusion of the different groups that populate a city. Government agencies, social groups, and civil societies have influential roles in shaping social integration.

African cities will continue to play a vital role in creating a socially-inclusive environ-ment as they grow rapidly. They will grow evermore into the focal point of industrial and post-industrial economic growth.

## 7.3 Economy

### 7.3.1 AT: Rural Alternatives

**Alternatives to urbanization fail to stimulate growth.**

**Devermont and Ross 19**

Judd Devermont and Todd Moss (Bloomberg news reporters). "Africa's Cities Are About to Boom – and Maybe Explode." July 25, 2019, https://www.bloomberg.com/opinion/articles/2019-07-25/africa-s-cities-are-about-to-boom-and-maybe-explode.

Africa's path to joining the global economy rests on the success or failure of its cities, not on its rural communities. Despite breathless press – such as a New York Times article on efforts to "make farming sexy" - agriculture provides poor employment prospects, especially for the young and educated. Similarly, a wave of new donor efforts to elec-trify Africa are mostly focused on delivering small solar home systems in rural areas. These can provide a few lights for poor remote households, but they are inadequate for the needs of city lifestyles and useless for industry and commerce where jobs are cre-ated. Given all this, it's shocking that Western efforts to aid the continent continue to be focused on an outdated rural paradigm; they must reorient toward the cities.

## 7.3.2 Cities Key

**Cities are key – specialization, transportation, human capital all prove.**

**Loo 18**

Connie Loo (writer for The Borgen Project, an innovative, national campaign that is working

to make poverty a focus of U.S. foreign policy). "Developing In-frastructure Is Alleviating

Poverty in Africa." *The Borgen Project*, May 17, 2018,

https://www.borgenmagazine.com/developing-infrastructure-is-alleviating-poverty-in-africa/

SEATTLE — The rise of "poor megacities" (the world's largest cities in low-income na-tions) over the last three decades has allowed for improvements in job opportunities, public goods, infrastructure and healthcare. Edward Glaeser, a professor of economics at Harvard University, noted that "cities are the best path we know out of poverty. They are the best transformers of civilizations. But, there are also demons that come with density." In other words, urbanization has mitigated poverty, but infrastructure and service delivery have not always kept up.

While sub-Saharan Africa's urbanization rate has increased from 15 percent in 1960 to 38 percent today, the population in its cities has nearly doubled between 1995 and 2015. More than 50 percent of these urban residents live in slums. In addition, only 40 percent of African city residents have access to improved sanitation facilities, the same percent-age since 1990. On top of that, overpopulation is clearly a growing issue in such areas because of Africa's high fertility rate.

In order for urbanization in Africa to produce lasting economic gains, the cities need to combat the consequences of increasing population density. These examples of the strategies African countries and people have used show how developing infrastructure is alleviating poverty.

The Rise of Secondary Cities

The urban development of secondary cities helps by decentralizing power and economic activity. This allows such secondary cities to gain greater access to capital and political autonomy to provide high-quality services. In the town of Kagera in Tanzania, people who moved there contributed more to overall consumption growth and poverty reduc-tion than people who moved to larger urban centers. Smaller urban centers tend to have more jobs that match the skills of these nearby migrators as well as lower transportation

costs and better social links.

Increasing Specialization

A shift towards higher productivity services helps cities become more like cities in devel-oped nations by specializing in different areas. For example, the Economic Community of Western African States (ECOWAS) established the ECOWAS Vision 2020 resolution in June 2007 to raise the standard of living in West Africa. One of the resolution's objectives was to improve connections between countries through social and economic infrastruc-ture like roads, telecommunication systems, energy and sea and air transport. Their plans have put into motion the construction of several hydraulic and thermal power stations.

Improving Transportation

Stronger transportation networks increase productivity as well. ECOWAS has been con-structing an expansion of the underwater pipeline connecting Nigeria to Ghana to reach Mauritania and Morroco, as well as a coastal road connecting Dakar to Lagos and a trans-Saharan road from Dakar to Kano in Nigeria. In addition, it has created a regional coastal navigation services company to expand the availability of sea travel as a more affordable alternative to road transport along the coast.

Taking Advantage of Human Capital

Improved health has increased human capital, but structural transformations are es-sential to sustaining human capital investments. In one example, entrepreneurs from Technoserve helped many Mozambicans out of poverty by providing a market systems approach to revive the country's cashew processing industry. Without their help in es-tablishing a reliable local market, the hundreds of thousands of small farmers would not have been able to gain the new jobs the industry had created. This example shows how developing infrastructure is alleviating poverty in Africa, as these farmers needed more than just improvements in farming practices and people to plant trees in order to succeed.


**Rapid urbanization increases access to jobs, public goods, infrastructure, and health care – that makes them the best path out of poverty and outweighs downsides**

**Barofsky et al. 16**

Jeremy Barofsky (Non-resident Fellow – Governance Studies at Brookings),
Eye-rusalem Siba (Former Brookings Expert), and Jonathan Grabinsky (Consultant

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at the World Bank), "Can rapid urbanization in Africa reduce poverty? Causes, opportunities, and policy recommendations," Brookings, September 7, 2016,

https://www.brookings.edu/blog/africa-in-focus/2016/09/07/can-rapid-urbanization-in-africa-reduce-poverty-causes-opportunities-and-policy-recommendations/

Sub-Saharan Africa is urbanizing rapidly but remains mostly rural. Already, cities such as Lagos and Kinshasa constitute urban agglomerations of over 10 million residents ("megacities"), while Dar-es-Salaam, Johannesburg, and Luanda are projected to reach that size by 2030. This rapid city growth in sub-Saharan Africa reflects trends across all developing nations. In 1950, most of the world's largest cities were in rich countries, but by 2015 nearly all were in low-income nations (Figure 1).

This massive population shift—dubbed the rise of poor megacities—creates both pro-found opportunities and challenges. Access to jobs, public goods, infrastructure, and health care are better in cities. However, if city populations continue to grow with-out economic transformation, a vicious and persistent cycle of high fertility, low wages, and persistent poverty could result. In June, the World Bank convened a conference of economic experts to discuss urbanization in Africa. In his opening remarks, Harvard University Professor of Economics Edward Glaeser noted: "Cities are the best path we know out of poverty. They are the best transformers of civilizations. But, there are also demons that come with density."

### 7.3.3 Entrepreneurship

**Urbanization creates a space for entrepreneurship and economic growth.**

**Emi 20**

Ishioma Emi (Ventures Africa journalist). "URBANISATION, AFRICA'S BIGGEST FU-TURE OPPORTUNITY." *Ventures Africa*, October 7, 2020. http://venturesafrica.com/276495-2/

The population shift from rural to urban areas, the ensuing decrease in the proportion of people living in rural areas, and the ways in which societies adapt to this change is called urbanisation. As of 2015, 50 percent of Africa's population lived in one of 7,617 urban cities – North Africa being the most urbanized region with about 78 percent of its population living in cities.

However, the urbanization rates of the African subregions have varied immensely over time. A report shows that between 1950-2010, Central and West Africa had the most volatile urban population growth rates, whereas East, Southern, and North Africa have been more consistent in their growth rates.

Looking at the immense potentialities for sub-Saharan Africa in urbanisation, some key factors that could facilitate its growth in the region have to be prioritised. These factors include the culture of the people, art forms, architecture, landscape, entrepreneurship, and funding opportunities.

In a panelist discourse titled The Cities of The Future at the recently concluded Future Summit 2020, the subject was thoroughly explored. The event was organised virtu-ally by the Segal Family Foundation on October 1, in collaboration with Robert Bosch Stiftung, where panelists projected that 13 of the world's largest urban cities would be in Africa with entrepreneurs playing huge roles in shaping Africa's future urbanisation.

But experts pointed out that the continent has a 100 billion infrastructural deficit with about two-third of African cities yet to be built, which could be linked to the total de-pendence on governments to facilitate the urban growth processes. The involvement of more entrepreneurs in the urban context and private investors and venture capital-ists, however, could trigger the needed growth, not only in the sector but also in the economy. Urbanisation would then be creating more employment opportunities which would translate to increased economic activity and growth.

## 7.3.4 Kigali Proves

**Kigali proves – African urbanization can be a driver of growth.**

**Emi 20**

Ishioma Emi (Ventures Africa journalist). "URBANISATION, AFRICA'S BIGGEST FU-TURE OPPORTUNITY." *Ventures Africa*, October 7, 2020. http://venturesafrica.com/276495-2/

Migration from rural settings occurs as a result of the need for an improved lifestyle but "Africa's urbanisation does not really correlate with growth," said Emmanuel Adegboye, Managing Partner of Utopia Lagos. As an urban innovation group focused on building an urban ecosystem for emerging cities, Adegboye said that Utopia has helped channel significant funds to urban innovators. Their presence and work in Nigeria reiterate the desperate need for more urban innovative organisations in Africa's smart city space.

So far, Kigali has built an enviable framework for a strong smart city ecosystem in the sub-Saharan African region. The City of Kigali has rapidly grown into a modern one ,in the last two decades and it has not only become Rwanda's most important business centre, but also the main port of entry. In 2008, the city won the UN-Habitat Scroll of Honor Award for its many innovations in building a model, modern city symbolized by zero tolerance for plastics, improved garbage collection, and a substantial reduction in crime. This shows that most of its over 1.2 million residents have adapted to its urban lifestyle.

## 7.3.5 Markets

**Urbanization creates new market opportunities for West African businesses to expand.**

**Africa.com 20**

Africa.com (media company providing coverage on topics such financial, political and cultural news related to Africa). "Pros & Cons of the Rapid Growth of African Cities," *Africa.com*, published 2020, https://africa.com/pros-cons-of-the-rapid-growth-of-african-cities/

New Market Opportunities

African businesses can generate new revenue streams from actively getting involved and creating new business models that can cater to the needs of the increasing city-dwellers. Businesses can address areas of need for city-settlers like health, housing, water supply, energy, connectivity, and education. These infrastructural challenges are immediate needs that need heavy investments across African cities, and govern-ments cannot take on these projects alone — they will need private partnerships. This is where these infrastructural challenges become opportunities for investors. Some in-vestors would even be able to secure first-mover benefits in these new markets.

New markets would not only arise in infrastructural needs. The increasing size of these African cities has economic benefits that would translate into rising income for the con-suming class. There will be a growing consumer class that will drive the demand for goods and services. Spending on clothes and other basic necessities will be fueled by low-income households, who will make up the majority of these African cities. Com-panies will need to understand their target market to take advantage of the population and know that most African cities are filled with 'young entry-level consumers.'

African cities can lead the digital transformation of Africa. In most cities in Africa, we are seeing entrepreneurs leveraging internet infrastructures to deliver value in a new way to urban dwellers. Easier access to the internet has been a major driver of the e-commerce boom in many Kenyan (and African) cities, triggering an emergence in on-line retailing. The growth in that market has, in turn, led to the demand for postal services and logistics. Most of these entrepreneurs are benefiting from shared services and infrastructure because of the scale of activity going on in cities.

## 7.3.6 Poverty

**Urbanization accelerates industrialization and reduces poverty.**

**Africa.com 20**

Africa.com (media company providing coverage on topics such financial, political and cultural news related to Africa). "Pros & Cons of the Rapid Growth of African Cities," *Africa.com*, published 2020, https://africa.com/pros-cons-of-the-rapid-growth-of-african-cities/

Opportunity to Accelerate Industrialization and Reduce Poverty Levels

Urbanization is key to economic growth and development. Most major cities usually go through the industrialization stage. African cities can provide access to a large pool of labour, cost-effective access to suppliers, and specialized services to firms, which, as a result, makes these cities attractive to more firms and can also raise the income levels in these cities. These cities can help firms lower transaction costs and create information-sharing opportunities, and create an atmosphere that enables innovation.

These cities have the benefits of providing adequate labour (cities have it easy attracting people with skills), material inputs and premises that match the unique needs of firms. Majority of the population can become engaged in high productivity activities moving away from low-productivity agriculture in the rural area. As a result of all these things, there can be economic growth.

Allowing history to guide us, in the 18th and 19th centuries, urbanization and industri-alization propelled Europe and the United States to prominence and spurred economic transformation; it transformed these regions into economic powers. These can be the case for Africa if the rapid growth in these cities is accompanied by the right policies. It's more like a win-win situation when growth is accompanied by good government policies. It often translates into improved living standards and higher quality of life. Economic dividends from cities can be passed down to rural areas as businesses and individual consumers in the city demand more agricultural products, which, in turn, could reduce poverty in these rural areas.

However, most African cities have jumped this critical industrialization stage needed for economic growth. But, it's never too late to get it right. Integrating the large popu-lation, moving from rural areas into the manufacturing sector rather than the informal services sector can accelerate industrialization, which, in turn, can provide more jobs,

raise the standard of living, and yield the badly-needed economic growth for African countries.

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## 7.3.7 Productivity

**Urbanization creates centers for well-paid and high-productivity jobs, such as finance, information tech, creative arts, data processing, and manufacturing.**

**Devermont and Ross 19**

Judd Devermont and Todd Moss (Bloomberg news reporters). "Africa's Cities Are About to Boom – and Maybe Explode." July 25, 2019, https://www.bloomberg.com/opinion/articles/2019-07-25/africa-s-cities-are-about-to-boom-and-maybe-explode.

Africa is rural. Or that's what senior Western officials envision when they talk about the continent. America's top diplomat for the region, Tibor Nagy, recently said that Africa is "by and large an agricultural society." He isn't alone: Germany's recent Marshall Plan with Africa insists that "rural areas will determine Africa's future."

This is wrong. Dangerously wrong.

Africa is increasingly urbanized, and its future will be shaped not in sleepy remote spaces but in the dense vibrant clusters of Lagos, Addis Ababa and Kinshasa. Big cities are becoming the engine of the continent, with huge implications for future en-ergy needs, security, governance and public services – as well as rising risks if urban growth is poorly managed.

According to the World Bank, urbanization is the single most important transforma-tion the African continent will undergo this century. Sub-Saharan Africa is already 40 percent urban, while tens of millions of people are flooding into cities every year. By 2050, it's estimated that the continent will host at least nine "megacities" of more than 10 million people and more than two dozen in excess of 5 million, about the size of metropolitan Washington. Many are far off the current radar: Antananarivo in Mada-gascar; Guinea's capital of Conakry; and N'Djamena, Chad.

Cities, of course, have for millennia been the locus of economic activity, wealth creation and especially jobs. By one detailed measure, Africa's consumer class is already more than 300 million and heavily concentrated in a handful of large metropolitan areas such as Cairo, Johannesburg, Kinshasa, Lagos and Luanda. The African Development Bank estimates that up to 12 million young Africans finish school and join the job market each year. The most attractive, well-paid and high-productivity jobs - in finance, information technology, creative arts, data processing and even manufacturing – will nearly all be in densely populated clusters.

**7.3.8 FDI**

**Urbanization attracts foreign direct investment which boosts development.**

**IISD 18**

SDG Knowledge Hub, "Foreign Direct Investment Key to Africa's Urban Development, UN-Habitat Report Finds," IISD, July 10, 2018, https://sdg.iisd.org/news/foreign-direct-investment-key-to-africas-urban-development-un-habitat-report-finds/

21 June 2018: Foreign firms and investors in African cities can play a critical role in the region's development, according to a UN Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) report that examines the impact of foreign direct investment (FDI) in Africa's cities.

The report titled, 'The State of African Cities 2018: The Geography of African Invest-ment,' explores how Africa can help finance its development by attracting FDI to cities, and notes that SDG 11 (sustainable cities and communities) recognizes cities' role as productivity hubs that drive growth and development, and attract investment. In her foreword to the report, UN-Habitat Executive Director Maimunah Mohd Sharif states that African governments must connect FDI to sustainable urbanization by strengthen-ing their urban policies and planning, and financial and legal systems.

Speaking during the report's launch on 21 June 2018, Aisa Kirabo Kacyira, UN-Habitat, highlighted the "groundbreaking" nature of the study due to its focus on FDI rather than on urbanization itself. She noted that, by 2030, half of Africa's population will live in cities, exacerbating unplanned urbanization, informal settlements, poverty, inequality, unemployment, humanitarian crises and conflict.

The report focuses on four industrial sectors: manufacturing, services, high-tech and pri-mary resources. It contends that, if "guided wisely" and with the appropriate financial and policy interventions, FDI can help alleviate urban poverty and unemployment by supporting Africa's transition towards growth led by manufacturing and knowledge-intensive industries, such as services and high-tech, rather than by primary resource sectors. According to the report, high-tech has the highest FDI growth rate in Africa, while manufacturing FDI has the largest share of investment and is the most important in terms of employment generation, with both sectors reducing income inequality if local skills are used.

The report explains that, while 15% of the world's population resides in Africa, only 5% of global FDI goes to the continent. However, Africa's FDI growth rate is the second

highest in the world, with FDI comprising a third of foreign financial resources flowing to Africa. North Africa receives most of its FDI from Europe and the Middle East, while Eastern Africa's FDI mostly comes from Asia, especially China. The report identifies Africa's main FDI centers as Cairo, Egypt; Lagos, Nigeria; Johannesburg, South Africa; and Nairobi, Kenya. It suggests that these and other major African urban hubs diversify their economies to better complement one another.

# 7.4 Secondary Cities

### 7.4.1 General

**Secondary cities are key to <u>inclusive growth</u> and solve many of the problems associated with megacities.**

**WEF 19**

World Economic Forum, "Why Africa's economic future lies in its smaller cities," May 22, 2019, https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2019/05/putting-africa-s-secondary-cities-first/

In the latest Mercer Quality of Living City Rankings, the highest-ranked African city, Port Louis, Mauritius, comes in at 83rd out of 231. That appears to be in keeping with a broader pattern: in terms of the quality of life in its cities, Africa lags behind most other world regions.

African cities' poor showing is a worrying indictment of urban planning on the conti-nent, particularly given that urbanization there is barreling ahead, regardless of whether its leaders have plans in place to manage the process. According to the OECD, because "Africa is projected to have the fastest urban growth rate in the world," its "cities will be home to an additional 950 million people" by 2050. Given these trends, African pol-icymakers urgently need to make the region's cities more attractive to international in-vestors, business people, and tourists, while also ensuring that urbanization remains inclusive.

But there is another key trend that has been neglected: the growing importance of Africa's secondary cities. Urbanization in Africa is not just about emerging megacities like Johannesburg, Kinshasa, Nairobi, Khartoum, Casablanca, and Greater Cairo, which alone will be home to an estimated 38 million people by 2050. Population is also boom-ing in Africa's "intermediary cities," which link remote and rural areas to larger urban centers.

Secondary cities will play a pivotal role in tackling the significant social, economic, and political challenges that lie ahead. Yet they generally are not on most policymakers' radar. For example, there is a woeful lack of comprehensive data on crime and policing in African secondary cities. And when think tanks and multilateral institutions publish special reports about African urbanization, they tend to focus only on the major cities'

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accomplishments and challenges, while ignoring governance issues, economic condi-tions, and infrastructure development in lesser urban areas.

Fortunately, Africapolis, a partnership between the OECD's Sahel and West Africa Club and e-Geopolis.org, has compiled rich new data to expand the scope of African's urban-ization debate. By integrating data on thousands of agglomerations of people – many with fewer than 100,000 inhabitants – Africapolis provides a base of evidence that poli-cymakers can use to assess how urbanization processes are unfolding.

For example, data from Africapolis show that when it comes to infrastructure, finan-cial investments, land development, and urban management, few African secondary cities have the autonomy to pursue long-term strategic planning. This suggests that national governments need to delegate more power to municipal policymakers. They also need to take secondary cities into account when devising national and subnational development strategies. By locating more governmental and administrative services in secondary cities, national governments can make these urban areas more attractive and capable of meeting citizens' needs.

Findings from Africapolis also reveal that African megacities and secondary cities are deeply intertwined. Megacities can offer a wealth of opportunities to citizens, by stream-lining the provision of public services and connecting workers to higher-skill jobs. But rapid population growth can result in lower wages, persistent poverty, housing short-ages, and other problems.

Owing to their size, secondary cities could mitigate some of the negative side effects of breakneck urbanization in megacities and provide more balance to the process. After all, they, too, can provide basic goods and services like housing, health care, and education, and probably at a lower cost. That is why urbanization experts have increasingly come to see secondary cities as the key to more inclusive growth, which requires that oppor-tunities be distributed equitably across the whole of a society, rather than concentrated in a few exclusive hubs.

Secondary cities can also boost African national economies. In addition to providing public services and facilities, they can serve as processing centers for agriculture and extractive industries, or they can become export centers – as in the case of Warri in Nigeria, Garoua in Cameroon, and the Huye District in Rwanda. By capitalizing on their secondary cities' geographic advantages, policymakers can raise the national and even global profiles of these areas, and create highly competitive trade and manufacturing clusters.

It is in all African governments' interest to incorporate secondary cities into their na-tional development strategies. Megacities alone cannot ensure inclusive urbanization and growth. But in concert with secondary cities, they can serve as nodes in a larger web of economic activity spanning a country's entire territory. And by accelerating regional development, supporting secondary cities would strengthen the megacities themselves. There is no reason why Africa's megacities and secondary cities alike cannot become magnets for people from across the continent and around the world.

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## 7.4.2 Balance

**They mitigate the effects of breakneck urbanization and provide balance.**

**Mayak 19**

Ibrahim Assane Mayak (former prime minister of Niger, CEO of the New Partner-ship for Africa's Development (NEPAD), the African Union Development Agency). "Putting Africa's Secondary Cities First." East African Business Week, 22 May 2019, https://www.busiweek.com/putting-africas-secondary-cities-first/

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## 7.4.3 Climate Change

**Secondary cities can be a model for green economic growth.**

**Badara 18**

Alé Badara SY (Urban planner, Senior Green City development Specialist, Global Green Growth Institute (GGGI),

Dakar, Senegal). "Green cities, a new model for a sustainable, resilient, inclusive and prosperous city." *Afrik 21*,

November 7, 2018,

https://www.afrik21.africa/en/green-cities-a-new-model-for-a-sustainable-resilient-inclusive-and-prosperous-city/

Focus on secondary cities

In Senegal, the Green Secondary Cities Development Program involves twenty-five mu-nicipalities with the support of the Global Green Growth Institute (GGGI) as the – five-year Cooperation Framework established with the Government. The cities eligible for this Program are essentially secondary cities suffering from a serious lack of equipment, infrastructure and jobs.

Indeed, the secondary cities development has not led to a sustained economic growth, with environmental challenges that exacerbate social inequalities and urban poverty. These secondary cities continue to grow, without the capacity to plan and manage their urban development, promote employment and economic growth. All of this justifies the Government's option to retain secondary cities as a model for green cities.

To achieve this, the approach is based on five "pillars" that form the basis of the Green Secondary Cities Development Framework Guidelines, on which the most important progress can be made. These pillars are: 1) Energy and energy efficiency, 2) Urban mo-bility, 3) Land use, 4) Water and sanitation, 5) Solid waste. The implementation strategy is based on two approaches: the "site" approach and the "pillar" approach. The "site" approach involves the implementation of all five pillars as part of a new development (urban centres, concerted development zones, special economic zones, etc.). While the "pillar" approach applies to an existing structure. Depending on the context and prior-ities, one or more pillars can be developed.

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## 7.4.4 Economy

**Secondary cities boost national economies.**

**Mayak 19**

Ibrahim Assane Mayak (former prime minister of Niger, CEO of the New Partner-ship for Africa's Development (NEPAD), the African Union Development Agency). "Putting Africa's Secondary Cities First." East African Business Week, 22 May 2019, https://www.busiweek.com/putting-africas-secondary-cities-first/

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It is in all African governments' interest to incorporate secondary cities into their na-tional development strategies. Megacities alone cannot ensure inclusive urbanization and growth. But in concert with secondary cities, they can serve as nodes in a larger web of economic activity spanning a country's entire territory. And by accelerating regional development, supporting secondary cities would strengthen the megacities themselves. There is no reason why Africa's megacities and secondary cities alike cannot become magnets for people from across the continent and around the world.

## 7.4.5 Linkage

**Secondary cities link remote and rural areas to urban centers --- that's pivot in solving social, economic, and political challenges**

**Mayak 19**

Ibrahim Assane Mayak (former prime minister of Niger, CEO of the New Partner-ship for Africa's Development (NEPAD), the African Union Development Agency). "Putting Africa's Secondary Cities First." East African Business Week, 22 May 2019, https://www.busiweek.com/putting-africas-secondary-cities-first/

But there is another key trend that has been neglected: the growing importance of Africa's secondary cities. Urbanization in Africa is not just about emerging megacities like Johannesburg, Kinshasa, Nairobi, Khartoum, Casablanca, and Greater Cairo, which alone will be home to an estimated 38 million people by 2050. Population is also boom-ing in Africa's "intermediary cities," which link remote and rural areas to larger urban centers.

Secondary cities will play a pivotal role in tackling the significant social, economic, and political challenges that lie ahead. Yet they generally are not on most policymakers' radar. For example, there is a woeful lack of comprehensive data on crime and policing in African secondary cities. And when think tanks and multilateral institutions publish special reports about African urbanization, they tend to focus only on the major cities' accomplishments and challenges, while ignoring governance issues, economic condi-tions, and infrastructure development in lesser urban areas.

Fortunately, Africapolis, a partnership between the OECD's Sahel and West Africa Club and e-Geopolis.org, has compiled rich new data to expand the scope of African's urban-ization debate. By integrating data on thousands of agglomerations of people – many with fewer than 100,000 inhabitants – Africapolis provides a base of evidence that poli-cymakers can use to assess how urbanization processes are unfolding.

For example, data from Africapolis show that when it comes to infrastructure, finan-cial investments, land development, and urban management, few African secondary cities have the autonomy to pursue long-term strategic planning. This suggests that national governments need to delegate more power to municipal policymakers. They also need to take secondary cities into account when devising national and subnational development strategies. By locating more governmental and administrative services in

secondary cities, national governments can make these urban areas more attractive and capable of meeting citizens' needs.

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## 7.5 Governance

### 7.5.1 Accountability

**Urbanization creates political pressures for accountability that improves governance.**

### Anku and Eni-Kalu 19

AMAKA ANKU (Africa Practice Head and a Director at the Eurasia Group) and TOCHI ENI-KALU (Africa Associate at the

Eurasia Group). "Africa's Slums Aren't Harbingers of Anarchy—They're Engines of Democracy." *Foreign Affairs*, December 16,

2019,

https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/africa/2019-12-16/africas-slums-arent-harbingers-anarchy-theyre-engines-democracy

The crowded streets of Ajegunle, one of the largest slums in Lagos, Nigeria, are un-paved and littered with garbage. When it rains, they turn into little rivers because of the poor drainage systems. And although Ajegunle's residents number anywhere from two million to five million, they have limited access to electricity, running water, and security.

Ajegunle is no outlier. For over half a century, sub-Saharan Africa has urbanized faster than any other region in the world. By 2040—a decade before Africa's population is forecast to reach 2.1 billion, or double what it is today—the continent will become ma-jority urban. That means over a billion people in poorly funded cities with crumbling or inadequate infrastructure.

Projections like these have inspired warnings of impending calamity. In his 1994 es-say "The Coming Anarchy," the author Robert Kaplan famously foresaw a twenty-first-century Africa beset by lawlessness, joblessness, administrative dysfunction, ethnoreli-gious tension, and unchecked pollution. More optimistic observers have seen opportu-nity in numbers, arguing that urban expansion can yield net benefits if associated risks, such as pollution and congestion, are mitigated. But even the optimists acknowledge that major challenges lie ahead.

Often overlooked in this debate is the role that electoral politics will play in shaping the future of African cities. As people move from the countryside to the cities, political power will move with them, transforming how the continent's democracies are gov-erned. Historically, urbanization has spurred demands for political accountability. The

U.S. civil rights movement was made possible in part by the migration of black Amer-icans to cities, where denser social networks made it easier to organize protests. The Arab uprisings of 2010–11 coincided with North Africa's attainment of majority urban status. Sub-Saharan Africa will soon cross the same threshold. The transition will bring a host of social, political, and environmental problems—but it also has the potential to improve governance across the continent.

THE RURAL-URBAN DIVIDE

Urban residents are, on average, better educated than rural dwellers and more exposed to contrasting political views. They also have better access to infrastructure, such as roads, electricity, potable water, and Internet connectivity—even in poorly resourced slums such Ajegunle. (Many Nigerians, particularly in rural parts of the north, have no access to electricity at all.) In part because of these quality-of-life differences, urban voters tend to care more about structural economic and governance issues than their rural counterparts, who are typically more concerned with basic social welfare needs.

Afrobarometer survey data from South Africa, Nigeria, and Kenya—three of the most populous democracies in sub-Saharan Africa—bear out these trends. The three coun-tries are at quite different stages of urbanization: South Africa (66 percent urban) has long been one of the continent's most urbanized countries; Nigeria (50 percent urban) achieved rural-urban parity only last year; and Kenya (27 percent urban) is still about three decades away from rural-urban parity. But in all three countries, city dwellers are more likely to identify corruption and economic management as core concerns, whereas people in rural areas are more likely to cite food and water shortages and inadequate infrastructure. Because Africa has long been majority rural (it remains 60 percent rural today despite rapid urbanization over the past 50 years), politicians have historically taken their cues from rural dwellers, promising to meet voters' immediate, basic needs rather than articulating clear policy visions for the future. But as the share of rural vot-ers across sub-Saharan Africa shrinks, demands for improved governance in the cities will become more and more difficult to ignore.

## 7.5.2 Democracy Impact

**That improves the quality and responsiveness of governance, promoting democracy.**

### Anku and Eni-Kalu 19

AMAKA ANKU (Africa Practice Head and a Director at the Eurasia Group) and TOCHI ENI-KALU (Africa Associate at the

Eurasia Group). "Africa's Slums Aren't Harbingers of Anarchy—They're Engines of Democracy." *Foreign Affairs*, December 16,

2019,

https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/africa/2019-12-16/africas-slums-arent-harbingers-anarchy-theyre-engines-democracy

OUT WITH THE OLD, IN WITH THE URBAN

By increasing political pressures for accountability, urbanization complements two other recent trends that augur well for African governance: rapid demographic change and growing political competition. Across the continent, governments have long been dominated by politicians who were either actively involved in their countries' independence struggles or took the reins soon afterward. Those veterans are now well past retirement age and slowly losing their grip on local political structures—a trend accelerated by the generational shift underway among voters: 60 percent of sub-Saharan Africa's population is under 25.

The combined effect of these changes has been to erode the old consensus among politi-cal elites, typically focused on uniting the political class against a common enemy such as colonialism, apartheid, or military rule. More than 60 years since the first African countries gained independence and over two decades since military regimes fell out of favor, the unifying power of such "us versus them" narratives has faded. As a result, previously dominant parties have lost their grip on power or succumbed to infighting, opening up space for new political entrants. For example, incumbents in Senegal and Nigeria were voted out of office for the first time in 2012 and 2015, respectively—in both cases after internal disagreements led previously dominant political blocs to splinter. In South Africa, the ruling African National Congress has lost close to 50 parliamentary seats in the 400-seat National Assembly since 2004 amid infighting between feuding factions of the party. Altogether, over 20 sub-Saharan African nations, including those under long-standing authoritarian rule such as Ethiopia, Zimbabwe, and Sudan, have had a transfer of power, often as a result of a competitive election, in the past four years alone.

Greater competition and accountability are, of course, no panacea. As the Brexit debacle

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in the United Kingdom; the revolutions in Egypt, Libya, and Syria; and the recent tur-moil in many other Western countries have driven home, demands for accountability do not always deliver political stability or continuity. The same will be true in sub-Saharan Africa, where more competitive election cycles will exert pressure on the pub-lic purse as administrations invest in tangible projects to sway voters and in building or strengthening political coalitions to ward off rivals. At the same time, faster turnover in government could result in greater policy volatility.

In the long term, however, such risks are a small price to pay for the benefits of increased accountability. Urban density will make it easier to mobilize popular support for or against policies, ideas, or regimes in democratic and nondemocratic countries alike, im-proving both the quality and the responsiveness of governance. In the Yoruba language, Ajegunle roughly translates to "the place where riches dwell." For most of the slum's impoverished residents, the name remains an aspiration. But as Nigeria grows more urban, and the concerns of Ajegunle become the concerns of the country, it may well become a reality.

## 7.6 AT: Disadvantages

### 7.6.1 AT: General Disads (Big Data)

**Big data solves disadvantages that may have existed in the past.**

**Loo 18**

Connie Loo (writer for The Borgen Project, an innovative, national campaign that is working to make poverty a focus of U.S. foreign policy). "Developing In-frastructure Is Alleviating Poverty in Africa." *The Borgen Project*, May 17, 2018,

https://www.borgenmagazine.com/developing-infrastructure-is-alleviating-poverty-in-africa/

Incorporating Big Data

New data collection techniques also show how developing infrastructure is alleviating poverty. Some recent studies have shown potential in the use of new satellite data sources that can better measure city size, economic growth and migration to improve target funding and to measure how effective policies may be.

In northern Kenya, satellites measure the amount of ground vegetation to predict how much pasture can be used for grazing livestock. During a drought, the satellite indicates the scarcity of pasture. In such cases, pastoralist policyholders are able to obtain an insurance payout to protect their cattle.

In Mali and Uganda, the micro-agricultural insurance program SUM Africa predicts crop yields of smallholder crop farmers by analyzing historical data. Farmers who pur-chased insurance receive a payout if predicted crop yields decrease to a certain level.

Through these and many other strategies to develop their infrastructure, African coun-tries have been helping their youth find jobs and reduce poverty. It is an ongoing pro-cess to make resources such as water, energy, and all-weather roads accessible to the poor, but these examples show the wide-ranging success that can be applied across the continent.

## 7.6.2 AT: General Disads (Colonialism)

**Critiques of urbanization are rooted in <u>self-fulfilling prophecies</u> of the colonial era.**

### Anku and Eni-Kalu 19

AMAKA ANKU (Africa Practice Head and a Director at the Eurasia Group) and TOCHI ENI-KALU (Africa Associate at the

Eurasia Group). "Africa's Slums Aren't Harbingers of Anarchy — They're Engines of Democracy." *Foreign Affairs*, December 16,

2019,

https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/africa/2019-12-16/africas-slums-arent-harbingers-anarchy-theyre-engines-democracy

The notion that urbanization is undesirable for developing countries, particularly in Africa, first took hold in the colonial era. European colonial administrators, fearing that dense urban areas would be difficult to control, often limited investment in city in-frastructure to discourage migration from the countryside. This was particularly true in countries under indirect rule, such as Ghana, Kenya, and Nigeria, where colonial admin-istrations focused on maximizing the extraction of raw materials. Upon independence, the level of urbanization on the continent was extremely low: in 1960, only 15 percent of sub-Saharan Africans lived in urban areas, compared with 34 percent globally. The only countries with reasonably developed urban infrastructure, such as South Africa, tended to be places where greater numbers of European settlers had prompted colonial administrations to make the requisite investments.

Migration to urban areas accelerated after independence, but owing in part to this colo-nial legacy, cities were ill-equipped to take in the newcomers, and large slums sprang up across the continent. Historically low levels of investment in education, health care, and physical infrastructure in most cities meant urbanization generally did not correlate with the same jumps in agricultural productivity or per capita income experienced in Asia, the Middle East, or North America and Latin America. Faced with this harsh real-ity, even postcolonial African governments began to view urbanization with skepticism. They demolished illegal urban settlements and focused youth employment programs on rural areas. In some cases, they continued the colonial tradition of failing to invest in urban infrastructure. In 1996, just over half of African governments had official policies designed to curb migration to urban areas, according to the United Nations. By 2013, the proportion had spiked to 85 percent.

The pessimistic view of African urbanization thus became a self-fulfilling prophecy. But the distortions that date back to the colonial period can be rectified with the right pol-

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icy interventions. And as urban dwellers gain more political clout—and politicians are incentivized to prioritize their needs—governments will come under greater pressure to make those interventions. This is already happening in Lagos, where improved tax compliance and greater scrutiny of public coffers has resulted in better public services and infrastructure than elsewhere in Nigeria. Lagos State was one of the first Nige-rian states to publish itemized budgets in an effort to show accountability, among other things (although it discontinued the practice). The state also maintains its own emer-gency services and chips in funding toward the local branch of the federal police. The result is a more effective security presence than in other parts of the country. Progress has been slow and uneven, but the trend lines are moving in the right direction.

### 7.6.3 AT: General Disads (Not Unique)

**No disadvantage uniqueness --- urbanization is the status quo.**

**Pinault 20**

Nicolas Pinault (journalist for Voice of America). "Rapid Urban Growth in Africa Poses Challenges ." *Voice of America*, February 07, 2020. https://www.voanews.com/africa/rapid-urban-growth-africa-poses-challenges

PARIS - Africa is projected to have the fastest population growth in the world over the next 30 years, and the majority of this growth will take place in urban areas. This tran-sition is profoundly transforming the continent.

African urbanization is massive and already a reality on the continent.

According to a new report from a Paris-based policy group, the Sahel and West Africa Club, more than 50% of Africans already live in one of the 7,600 urban areas across the continent.

In the coming decades, existing cities are expected to grow and many new cities to emerge.

Philipp Heinrigs is a senior economist at the Organization for Economic Cooperation Development.

## 7.6.4 AT: General Disads (Future)

**Even if urbanization isn't good now, it's key to future economic prosperity, so the future benefits of urbanization done right outweigh.**

**Lawson 19**

Tobi Lawson (Co-founder of Strap Labs), "The future of Africa lies in its cities – so let's get it right," Africa Report, December 9, 2019,

https://www.theafricareport.com/21004/the-future-of-africa-lies-in-its-cities-so-lets-get-it-right/

Africa's cities are growing, but without the accompanying economic transformation -- keeping them in a 'low-development trap'.

Given the abundance of natural resources in the continent, it is a tempting proposition to think that Africa's economic prosperity lies in the efficient management of resource revenue. But this would be wrong. The future of Africa lies in its cities – and all ev-idence indicates that the continent is in serious risk of jeopardising that future. The World Bank states that urbanisation "is the single most important transformation that the African continent will undergo in this century". Over half of the African population is projected to live in cities by 2040, rising from the current level of 40%. This is part of a historical trend. Urbanisation was at 5% in Africa at the turn of the twentieth century and reached about 10% in 1950, the same level as Europe in the 15th to 16th century. Today, urbanisation in Africa is at the same level as contemporary Asia. WHY CITIES MATTER There are many implications for urbanisation in Africa – chief of which is that policy priority should reflect this reality. Consumption of goods and services on the continent is driven by over 300 million people, most of who reside in cities. Despite the emphasis on agriculture by policymakers and donors, most young Africans find op-portunities in cities more attractive than farming. Firms in the most valuable industries like finance, information technology, retail and manufacturing, find the most produc-tive workers in cities – in line with the evidence that the most motivated and productive of the rural population end up moving to cities. DENSITY RULES Urban economist Ed-ward Glaeser called cities "our species' greatest invention" – because cities contribute to human enrichment by exploiting the intrinsic benefits of having humans living in close proximity. Density rapidly reduces the cost of trade in goods, services and information. Firms clustered in and around cities can serve consumers at reduced costs, and also ben-efit from transfer of learning and technology from other firms. Cities reduce the cost of the provision of public goods like roads, electricity, public water supply by shortening

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the distance those infrastructure travel to reach people. Urban density also reduces the cost of accessing public goods and private socioeconomic activities for people – creating a virtuous circle. One theory for the inevitable rise of urbanisation is economic devel-opment through what economists call structural transformation. For the most part of human history, our main economic means was through agriculture. Long distance trade and export of primary harvests financed the construction of early cities. But with agri-cultural productivity (through technical improvement) and population growth, there was a significant surplus of farm workers. The result was migration of rural farmers to burgeoning urban centers to seek economic opportunities. This is the rural "push effect". The coming of the Industrial Revolution saw the second great wave in urban-isation. Factory jobs were better paying and more consistent than agricultural harvest for some farmers. Many of them abandoned rural life to try their luck in industrial towns and cities. Industrial productivity and expansion of industrial production fur-ther attracted and absorbed many more rural farmers as industrial workers. Although these created new challenges like pollution and food security, safety standards were later improved through regulation, and food imports were the buffer for countries with a comparative advantage in manufacturing. WHY IS AFRICA DIFFERENT? In Africa, economic development and urbanisation appear to be decoupled. Africans are mov-ing to cities at historically lower incomes. A World Bank study concluded that African cities are stuck in a "low-development trap". The result is that city dwellers and firms are locked out of the intrinsic benefits of urban development. Emergent urban patterns in Africa are cities that are fragmented, disconnected, and costly. African cities are 20% more fragmented than in Asia and Latin America, with exposure near the city centre 37% lower. This is caused by low infrastructure investment and the prevalent urban building patterns. City building in Africa usually take the form of expanding the city's footprint by building at the edge of existing urban areas or building new satellite set-tlements that do not overlap with existing built areas. This creates urban sprawl and robs the city of vital density that aid connection of people and firms. Cities are labour markets that matches firms and job-seekers, but disconnection raises the costs of match-ing, with firms feeling the heat from higher wage demands without productivity gains. Manufacturing firms in African cities pay a higher nominal wage than firms in other re-gions. Consequently the rate of investment slows down and physical infrastructure fail to match population growth. Housing investment already lags urbanisation rates by up to nine years with up to 50% of the population living three people to a room in Abid-jan. Paved roads occupy a far smaller share of urban land than other regions, and the share of urban population living in slums is up to 60%, with cities like Lagos rising up

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to 70%. African cities are also expensive. Urban dwellers spend 55% more on housing, 42% more on transportation, 35% more on foods relative to their income. The overall urban dynamics in African cities is one of negative path dependence. African cities are avoided by global and regional investors and trading partners due to low expectation of returns. This leads to low investment, and means the current inefficient urban forms remain in place.

### 7.6.5 AT: Cultural Heritage – Architecture

**Integration of architectural customs helps conserve cultural heritage in urbanized cities.**

**Emi 20**

Ishioma Emi (Ventures Africa journalist). "URBANISATION, AFRICA'S BIGGEST FU-TURE OPPORTUNITY." *Ventures Africa,* October 7, 2020. http://venturesafrica.com/276495-2/

Again, the place of architecture in urban development is critical. This is because archi-tecture reflects the future and lifestyle that people envisage. It bears the art forms and cultural heritage unique to people. In fact, the chief flagbearer of any urbanisation can be said to be its architectural forms.

"Urbanisation is really about using architecture to create art forms that people would become proud of," another panelist, Kofi Bio, Associate Principal (Accra) at Adjaye As-sociates, said. Bio emphasised the need to build structures with quality materials in a way that would create maximum balance in the surrounding environment. According to him "the relationship between the quality of architecture and the landscape reiterates urbanisation."

Talent, skill, and a large amount of a young population put Africa in a favourable po-sition to build the cities of the future if access to the needed funds and an enabling environment is provided for. Further commenting, Adegboye said, "I think we have the talent to build the cities we need. We have the largest number of young population and probably have the most entrepreneurial population. A lot more needs to be done for these talents to be maximised."

The cities of the future should be built with Africans at heart. They should reflect what Africans want to see and should work for everyone and not just a section or class of people living in them.

## 7.6.6 AT: Overpopulation

**No disad – current African growth only seems large because Africa has been artificially underpopulated through the slave trade and colonialism**

**Amoo 20**

Franklin Olakunle Amoo (co-founder of Baylis Emerging Markets, an Africa focused in-vestment firm). "Re-Imagining The African City:

Sustainability, Logistics & Prosperity." *Forbes*, November 8, 2020,

https://www.forbes.com/sites/franklinamoo/2020/11/08/re-imagining-the-african-city-geography-logistics--prosperity/?sh=e1776663675c

For most of the time since, the African continent has been statistically, and artificially, underpopulated. While much is said about current population growth, and despite pop-ular perceptions of a continent teeming with an irresponsibly multiplying multitude, the truth is that the continent – by virtually any measure - remains almost shockingly empty. At present, Africans make up just 15% of the world's population while Africa comprises just over 20% of the world's landmass. Europe's 7% of the world's landmass packs in 11% of global population; Asia squeezes no less than 60% of the world's peo-ple into 30% of the earth's land. Viewed through the prism of population density, the figures are even more stark: 246 people per square mile in Asia and 188 souls for every European square mile make Africa's 87 appear downright lonely.

Population projections for Africa strike many as surprising – or even alarming, but un-derstanding the scale of depopulation that occurred during the slave trade may produce a different postulation: that for more than three centuries African population growth was unnaturally, and dramatically, low. Thus it shouldn't surprise a close observer that some of the key nodes of expected population growth – Democratic Republic of the Congo, Nigeria, Angola - were also those whose populations were stunted the most during the slave trade and the colonialism which followed. A millennia of slave trade in which first Arabs and then Europeans carted off tens of millions of Africans into bondage, with most hostages failing to procreate due to death, disease or castration had by the middle of last century left the world with frightfully few Africans. In 1800 Euro-pean commentators marked Africa's population at roughly 90 million in contrast with Europe's 150 million. Given the paucity of information such observers would have had on a continent for which they had limited understanding, it is likely they significantly undercounted Africans. But by the dawn of the age of African independence at the end of the 1950s there were still almost twice as many Europeans as there were Africans.

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All that has changed sharply in the modern era. The emergence of modern African statehood over the last half century has sharply reduced, though not eliminated, the forcible trafficking of human beings. Along with post-colonial improvements in aver-age incomes and nutrition, the cessation of human kidnapping has allowed for a historic resurgence in African population growth – and allows us to experience a more normal-ized population growth rate. African population growth will likely expand for decades to come. These burgeoning, youthful populations thus now require updated accom-modations, many of which will be urban. Current cities on the continent are largely unplanned affairs with poor transport links - typically joining up the former colonial spaces overtaken as upmarket residential and commercial centers by local elites, with metastasizing shanty towns occupying the spaces in between. By and large they also weren't built with an eye for aesthetic beauty, limiting tourism potential and discour-aging a wider spread expat migration of knowledge workers to the continent. Africa's iconic skylines are largely still in the future and landmark historic buildings mostly lost to antiquity. This represents an exciting opportunity for urban planners, architects and developers to fill out the canvas and design Africa's future.

## 7.6.7 AT: Slums

**Slum renovation is ongoing and planned.**

**Loo 18**

Connie Loo (writer for The Borgen Project, an innovative, national campaign that is working

to make poverty a focus of U.S. foreign policy). "Developing In-frastructure Is Alleviating

Poverty in Africa." *The Borgen Project*, May 17, 2018,

https://www.borgenmagazine.com/developing-infrastructure-is-alleviating-poverty-in-africa/

Renovating Slums

Upgrades to current slum settings improve welfare and child health, which in turn en-courage demographic transitions. The Kenyan government and UN-Habitat signed a memorandum in 2003 that led to the Kenya Slum Upgrading Programme. This program replaced the existing shacks with modern high-rise buildings and facilitated the inclu-sion of services like water, sanitation and electricity. Similar projects are in the works in Ghana and Niger.

**Slums can be managed.**

**Campbell 18**

John Campbell (Ralph Bunche Senior Fellow for Africa Policy Studies), "Africa's Rapid Urban Population Growth Is Problematic, but Can Be Managed," Council on Foreign Re-lations, July 5, 2018,

https://www.cfr.org/blog/africas-rapid-urban-population-growth-problematic-can-be-managed

A "demographic dividend," economic growth potential brought on by a growing working-age population, together with rapid urbanization will accelerate economic development, or so the "Africa rising" narrative goes. However, given Africa's lack of basic infrastructure, ranging from roads to hospitals to schools, both propositions are dubious. Stephen Commins of the Africa Center for Strategic Studies recently authored a highly useful report explaining the challenges of population growth and urbanization in Africa. But his report also points to specific instances in which policies have successfully overcome these challenges and advanced economic development and social cohesion in urban areas with ballooning populations.

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Commins points to how the rapid growth of urban slums is creating a new source of fragility for African governments. The statistics are startling. In South Sudan, more than 90 percent of the urban population lives in slums, and the percentage is almost as high in the Central African Republic. As for urban growth rates in specific cities, Nigeria's capital, Abuja, will have grown by almost 700 percent between 1995 and 2025, more than any other major African city, though it is worth noting that Abuja did not become Nigeria's capital until 1991. But even in long-established Lusaka, the population will have grown almost 300 percent.

Weak governments unable to resolve conflicts over urban land or provide services have sown the seeds of a growing mistrust of government authority. Commins's bottom line: "Central to the connections between insecurity and political fragility in cities is the interplay of unplanned growth, low levels of trust in security sector institutions, the youth bulge (with pressures on livelihoods and public spaces) and the emergence of ungoverned spaces (i.e. controlled by non-state actors, including criminal networks)." His report shows how the concept of "ungoverned spaces," generally applied to rural areas, is also relevant in densely-populated urban areas.

Commins supplements the earlier discussion by describing a variety of successful policy initiatives in cities such as Treichville (Abidjan), Johannesburg, Lagos, Yaounde, and Monrovia. The initiatives are not one-size-fits-all fixes—each reflects specific and local needs and concerns—but if a common theme does exist, it is that competent governance can overcome and even harness explosive urban growth.

## 7.6.8 AT: Pandemics

**Urbanization globally is an alt cause to pandemics and cities provide public health systems to mitigate the risks of disease spread.**

**Meyers 20**

Talya Meyers (Senior Editor and Writer at Direct Relief), "The World is Rapidly Urbanizing. That May Mean

More         Epidemics.,"         Direct         Relief,         April         7,         2020,

https://www.directrelief.org/2020/04/the-world-is-rapidly-urbanizing-that-may-mean-more-epidemics/

It probably won't surprise anyone to learn that the experts are divided – in this case, on the question of whether cities are good for humanity's health. "It gets into a whole nasty debate among public health researchers," said Matt Boyce, a senior research as-sociate at Georgetown University who studies urban health. On the plus side: Cities have expansive public health systems, higher concentrations of health care providers, and large, sophisticated facilities. On the downside: Cities cram people more closely together, in worse air, in conditions that haven't always been – and aren't always now – particularly sanitary. Perhaps most relevant to the present moment, cities have always been places where infectious diseases – from the bubonic plague to SARS – spread more quickly. "It is clear that diseases and cities have been tied at the hip as long as people have been living in cities," said Roger Keil, a professor of urban and suburban studies at York University. That includes the Covid-19 pandemic, which began in a megacity – Wuhan, in China's Hubei province – and quickly swept around the globe. Regardless of whether they're healthy places to live, humans in the modern era are indisputably drawn to cities. More than half the world's population currently lives in an urban envi-ronment, according to the UN. In 1800, that number was 2%, Keil said. In 2050, it will be 70%. That may mean that there are more major outbreaks in our future – and that they may spread more rapidly than ever. Originally, Keil said, living in cities brought an "urban health penalty," caused by, among other things, pollution and close, unsani-tary conditions. At the beginning of the 20th century, that changed. "In industrialized countries and those who were more developed, it was now possible to develop public health and sanitation measures that turned the urban health penalty into an advantage," Keil said. "Now you had clean water and a sewer system and a public health facility and parks." It was only at the end of the century, when humans began to move in huge numbers into cities – pushing their limits outward into previously remote spaces
– that urban health began to be more unsafe, frequently because of diseases as varied

as E. coli and HIV/AIDS, both of which saw substantial urban outbreaks. Then came SARS in 2003. The disease struck Toronto particularly hard. "For the first time, [SARS] brought back this idea that if you are living in cities, whether you're in a global south or a global north, whether you're in the east or the west…all of a sudden we discovered that we are vulnerable," Keil said.

# 8 Con Evidence

## 8.1 City Planning

### 8.1.1 Crime

**Lack of infrastructure, state authority, and unemployment create the perfect conditions for rampant crime.**

**Africa.com 20**

Africa.com (media company providing coverage on topics such financial, political and cultural news related to Africa). "Pros & Cons of the Rapid Growth of African Cities," *Africa.com*, published 2020, https://africa.com/pros-cons-of-the-rapid-growth-of-african-cities/

Crime and Security Challenges

Talking about jobs – Security definitely goes hand-in-hand with infrastructure. Without adequate infrastructures, you have a problem with security. Infrastructure and security determine productivity. Research has it that there are many young city dwellers. It says more than half of Africa's population are under the age of 18, and 19% are between the ages of 15 and 24 years old. Without infrastructure, there can't be jobs for these vibrant youths, and without jobs, there would likely be a rise in crime and other nefarious ac-tivities.

We all know who makes work for idle hands. For those who don't, it's the devil. The Arab Spring in North African cities, the xenophobia in South Africa, and the cases of kidnapping in major cities in Nigeria earlier this year are some of the results of popula-tion growth that has been met with lack of jobs. Many of the youth in these cities are plugged into social media and know what they are missing out on. These things will lead to restlessness and would result in higher crime rates. From rape and kidnapping

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to robbery cases in African cities, these are expected to continually rise if the growth in these cities doesn't commensurate with economic growth.

Some of the cities with the highest crime rate include: Rustenburg City with 11,117 cases in 2015, according to Crime Statistics South Africa (crimes included household burglary, kidnapping, hijacking, and political violence). In Pietermaritzburg, the crime rate has been on the increase year-on-year. According to Crime Statistics South Africa, in 2013 there were 13,596 cases, which rose to 14,794 cases in 2014, while in 2015, there were 15,720 cases.

Some of the other African cities with high crime rates are Benghazi, Libya; Johannes-burg, Cape Town, Port Elizabeth and Durban in South Africa; Lagos, Nigeria (Street gangs dubbed "area boys" cause a lot of problems, while Lagos is also an internet scam hotbed – cyber criminals prey on innocent foreigners); Luanda, Angola (according to the UK Government service Gov.UK, crimes in the city include carjackings, assaults, homicides, muggings for valuables like mobile phones, armed robberies, and rape in-cidences both in nightlife areas and private homes; Nairobi, Kenya (the US Overseas Security Advisory Council (OSAC) rates Nairobi's crime levels as being "critical").

Also, the security systems in most African cities are not so sophisticated to cater to the large population. This means rapid growth in some of these African cities is only creat-ing more criminals and endangered lives.

The future of African cities is binary as clearly seen from the opportunities and chal-lenges highlighted. If African leaders remain headstrong in poor decisionmaking, they would simply ratchet up the problems plaguing African cities today and totally wipe out the advantages that could have been obtained from the growth in these cities. With quality leadership, with good vision, we can develop a blueprint on how to achieve the potentials of the rapid growth occurring in African cities. Africa is definitely at a tipping point; the coin is on its side and about to fall, but African leaders have the real chance to decide which side of this coin shows up.

## 8.1.2 Infrastructure

**Urbanization creates infrastructural lapses, traffic congestion, and low water supply --- those lower quality of life.**

**Africa.com 20**

Africa.com (media company providing coverage on topics such financial, political and cultural news related to Africa). "Pros & Cons of the Rapid Growth of African Cities," *Africa.com*, published 2020, https://africa.com/pros-cons-of-the-rapid-growth-of-african-cities/

Infrastructural Challenges

"We have to be impatient in moving Africa forward," says Adewunmi Ayodeji Adesina, the President of African Development Bank. Africa needs infrastructure like a lost trav-eller needs a drink in the middle of hot Sahara. The African Economic Outlook 2016 estimated that, on average, African countries would need to spend 5-7% of the gross domestic product, or a minimum of $100bn a year on public infrastructure.

Going back to my street in my area in Lagos, even though it has more than doubled in economic and social activities and the population has also doubled, the infrastructure has largely remained the same — even become worse in some cases. The road has grad-ually become worse, and public water supply is totally unavailable. The rapid growth is largely leading to overburdening of infrastructures, leading to low-quality life for most people.

Also, the traffic congestion at peak hours of the day in African cities is a big problem. Traffic congestion worsens with more people moving into these cities.

Let me help you understand this with my experience of going to work in the morning in the city of Lagos. The traffic is mostly at a standstill for hours. It's not just because there are so many people going to work in the morning, which, of course, is part of the reason, but because of the bad roads in some places. Also, whenever there's traffic, transport cost is usually doubled. Earlier this year, Nairobi, Kenya was ranked the 2nd worst city in the world on traffic congestion. Traffic in cities is a result of urbanization, and African cities must also react by building better roads and developing a better transport system that can cater to a large number of people already living in these cities and those that would surely move in.

So, what we have is the few infrastructures already in place in health, education, roads,

etc., being unable to cater to people currently in most of these cities, and might just lead to utter collapse when more people pour in from rural areas (where most also lack basic infrastructures).

Mario Pezzini, director of the OECD's Development Centre, said, "It is not possible to separate these issues…What we are really talking about is how do you create conditions and services, not only to provide a better quality of life, which is crucial, but also to create opportunities for economic development…If you don't create infrastructure, the jobs will not be there."

### 8.1.3 Slums

**Urbanization leads to <u>slums</u> – city officials can't keep up with growth.**

**Pinault 20**

Nicolas Pinault (journalist for Voice of America). "Rapid Urban Growth in Africa Poses Challenges ." *Voice of America*, February 07, 2020. https://www.voanews.com/africa/rapid-urban-growth-africa-poses-challenges

"Urbanization will continue in Africa and current projections indicate that Africa's pop-ulation will double between now and 2050," Heinrigs said. "Two-thirds of this popu-lation growth will be absorbed by urban areas, which means that in the next 30 years African cities will be home to an additional 950 million people."

These demographic trends create many challenges for city officials, who often lack the policies, funds or data to cope with rapid expansion.

Yvonne Aki-Sawyerr is the mayor of Freetown in Sierra Leone.

"The main challenges Freetown faces are the ability to plan its growth and, consequently, the establishment of 68 informal settlements, which people also refer to as slum commu-nities, which represents 35% of our population," Aki-Sawyerr said. "And also the lack of planning, inadequate infrastructures and sanitation."

**Slums are an intrinsic byproduct of the rate of urbanization. Two billion will live in slums globally at the end of the decade.**

**Bollyky 19**

Thomas J. Bollyky (director of the global health program and senior fellow for global health, economics, and development at the Council on Foreign Relations (CFR). He is also an adjunct professor of law at Georgetown University). "The Future of Global Health Is Urban Health." *Council on Foreign Relations*, January 31, 2019, https://www.cfr.org/article/future-global-health-urban-health

Driven by naturally increasing populations, many cities in low- and middle-income na-tions are expanding at record rates. Between 1950 and 2010, the urban populations of Africa and Asia expanded as much as those in Europe did between 1800 and 1910, in half the time.

Indeed, population growth is outpacing city infrastructure in the fastest-urbanizing na-tions, especially in sub-Saharan Africa. The availability of piped water in cities in the region fell by 10 percent between 1990 and 2015, and only four out of ten new city res-idents had access to improved sanitation as defined by the World Health Organization [PDF]. The construction of adequate housing and paved roads is likewise not keeping up with urbanization in many poor cities.

One worrisome consequence of population growth outstripping urban infrastructure has been the expansion of slums, overcrowded areas with inadequate housing and pub-lic services. The United Nations estimates that 881 million people lived in slums in lower-income nations in 2014, roughly one out of every eight people worldwide. In Africa and South Asia, a majority of city residents live in slums. Almost the entire urban population (96 percent) of the Central African Republic lives in similar circumstances. By 2030, the population of slum dwellers is expected to reach two billion globally.

### 8.1.4 Slums – Disease Impact

**Slums cause diseases such as AIDS.**

**Devermont and Ross 19**

Judd Devermont and Todd Moss (Bloomberg news reporters). "Africa's Cities Are About to Boom – and Maybe Explode." July 25, 2019, https://www.bloomberg.com/opinion/articles/2019-07-25/africa-s-cities-are-about-to-boom-and-maybe-explode.

But, of course, urbanization has serious downsides. On average, 60 percent of Africa's city dwellers live in slums, and they suffer disproportionately from communicable and non-communicable diseases. AIDS prevalence is generally higher for urban popula-tions than rural peers; and obesity is rising.

## 8.1.5 Heroin

**Urbanization creates populations vulnerable to the drug trade and a lack of governance. This leads to a burgeoning heroin market.**

**ENACT 20**

Project ENACT (three-year project (2017-2019) which works to mitigate the impact of transnational organized crime on development, governance, security and the rule of law in Africa). "Heroin is now a major urban development challenge in Africa." *Institute for Security Studies*, 13 AUG 2020. https://issafrica.org/iss-today/heroin-is-now-a-major-urban-development-challenge-in-africa

The rapid growth in the trade and consumption of heroin is having a direct and negative effect on urban politics and development in Africa. It is enabled by organised crime and corruption and has led to an 'untreated' public health crisis. Yet governments have scant understanding of the economic, security and social implications of an addictive substance being illegally peddled to vulnerable populations.

Africa's east coast was for decades a secondary route for the international heroin trade, with its long coastline providing safe landing sites for Afghan heroin destined for mar-kets in Europe and North America. The African route became more important as Middle East conflict and better enforcement shut down traditional access to Europe.

Heroin then began to leak into African markets and a significant amount is now traded and consumed locally, with devastating impact. The United Nations estimates that 20 to 40 tons of heroin enter Africa annually, but the actual amount may be much higher. Accurate figures are hard to determine.

New research by the ENACT transnational organised crime programme shows that as local consumption has grown, land transport and inland urban centres have become more important. Heroin hubs have developed around airports with regional and in-ternational connections. The drug also moves south and west along a web of roads, creating new markets and pulling in new users in small towns along the way.

The shift in the continent's heroin economy is now about local markets and African consumers. States should anticipate further massive growth in the drug trade alongside the rise of African megacities and expanding towns.

In these rapidly growing urban nodes, inhabitants contend with inadequate provision of housing, transport, infrastructure, water and sanitation among other services. Local

governments are frequently overwhelmed and lack experience and budgets to plan and develop healthy, secure and economically dynamic urban environments.

With limited employment for young low-skilled migrants in cities and towns, and low levels of governance and investment, urbanisation leads to concentrations of people vulnerable to the drug market. The African heroin boom is enabled by unplanned ur-banisation, weak governance and widespread corruption among police and politicians in Kenya, Tanzania, Mozambique and South Africa, the ENACT study found.

**The problem is self-reinforcing. The drug trade creates corruption, which further allows the drug trade to spread in a vicious cycle.**

**ENACT 20**

Project ENACT (three-year project (2017-2019) which works to mitigate the impact of transnational organized crime on development, governance, security and the rule of law in Africa). "Heroin is now a major urban development challenge in Africa." *Institute for Security Studies*, 13 AUG 2020. https://issafrica.org/iss-today/heroin-is-now-a-major-urban-development-challenge-in-africa

This development challenge has coincided with criminal networks willing to exploit the growing availability of heroin. Drugs and corruption form damaging symbiotic re-lationships. The heroin trade uses unscrupulous officials to maximum advantage, who in turn actively seek to corrupt the mechanisms of enforcement and governance.

ENACT found that in some instances criminal drug networks operate from inside lo-cal political systems. They take control of urban infrastructure provision, increasing development costs and obstructing efforts to regulate or upgrade services.

As expanding illicit operations need more and more protection from investigation and arrest, so corruption climbs up the police hierarchy and transfers to elected officials. Politicians have been linked to these networks and drug money used to fund patron-age and election campaigns. In some cases, drug business merges with grey markets, allowing criminal entrepreneurs to adopt a legal front.

Because the heroin trade has played such a key underground role in urban development, drug markets need to be understood as one of the challenges facing the improvement and governance of cities and towns. And responses will need to be developmental – not just based on arrests and prosecutions.

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**The impact is urban violence, including gang violence, police abuses, and vigilante attacks. East and Southern Africa prove.**

**ENACT 20**

Project ENACT (three-year project (2017-2019) which works to mitigate the impact of transnational organized crime on development, governance, security and the rule of law in Africa). "Heroin is now a major urban development challenge in Africa." *Institute for Security Studies*, 13 AUG 2020. https://issafrica.org/iss-today/heroin-is-now-a-major-urban-development-challenge-in-africa

Governments must acknowledge and combat the systematic corruption of police and local politicians by drug traffickers. Long-term interventions are needed to deal with the illicit economy and its social drivers. Without a formal response to the problems generated by illicit markets, there will be a rise in gang violence, police abuses and vigilante attacks.

This social crisis has largely been ignored by governments in East and Southern Africa. Responses directed at drug users are counter-productive while the heroin economy's deep connections to corruption, urban violence and other illicit economies go unad-dressed.

Harm-reduction models – which should include law enforcement, health and social de-velopment responses – offer prospects for tackling the social and some of the economic consequences of heroin trade and use.

## 8.2 Disease

### 8.2.1 AT: Health Benefits

**Health benefits of urban life are not distributed to poor residents. Diseases are more likely to spread and go global faster.**

**Bollyky 19**

Thomas J. Bollyky (director of the global health program and senior fellow for global health, economics, and development at the Council on Foreign Relations (CFR). He is also an adjunct professor of law at Georgetown University). "The Future of Global Health Is Urban Health." *Council on Foreign Relations*, January 31, 2019, https://www.cfr.org/article/future-global-health-urban-health

Evidence is mixed on whether cities can continue to conquer disease as poor nations rapidly urbanize. The slums in lower-income nations today are considerably healthier than were the nineteenth-century cities of the United States and Europe, where between two hundred and three hundred out of every one thousand children under five died. There is limited health data on modern slums, however, and much progress is reported in averages that may mask disparities. There is some indication that the health benefits of urban life may not equally distributed to the poor residents of cities like Cairo, Dhaka, or Nairobi.

There are also significant challenges ahead. Poor, crowded cities with limited health systems are ideal incubators for outbreaks of emerging infections, like the Ebola epi-demics in West Africa in 2014 and the Democratic Republic of Congo in 2018. These cities are often larger and denser than Athens and the other urban centers of antiquity, which means diseases are more likely to spread and more likely to affect a larger num-ber of people. Outbreaks that occur in today's cities can spread internationally faster and more easily, with the increased speed and volume of global trade and travel.

## 8.2.2 Chicken

**Specifically, chicken farms create discrepancies in sanitation that make the emergence and spread of disease outbreaks likely.**

### Voice of America 20

VOA News. "Rural-to-Urban Transition May Explain Viral Outbreaks: Vietnam Study." *Voice of America*, April 06, 2020.

https://www.voanews.com/science-health/coronavirus-outbreak/rural-urban-transition-may-explain-viral-outbreaks-vietnam

Expanding on the point made by Gates about Ebola, the East-West Center Fellows ex-plained how Vietnam's move from rural to urban development affected its avian flu cases, and what that could mean as the world fights the coronavirus.

The 2017 study, conducted with Vietnamese colleagues Nong Huu Duong and Chinh Tran, noted that as cities grow in developing countries, the demand for eggs and chicken increases.

"Much of this demand is being met by large farms in the peri-urban areas surrounding cities," the study said. "In Vietnam and other countries of Southeast Asia, numerous intensive chicken farms have sprung up in these areas."

These "peri-urban" areas transitioning from rural to city life have a variety of birds, a location near highways to help with transporting goods, and sanitation inequality among those who have toilets that flush and those who don't.

"This uneven process can be characterized as a period of confusion and social and en-vironmental instability," the study said. "One important result is a heightened risk of infectious disease in both humans and domestic animals."

Farmers raise chickens outside cities to serve urban customers; if those farmers contract avian flu, the disease could be transported into the nearby city, where the denser popu-lation would help it spread even faster. That could have been the case with COVID-19 as well.

The scholars recommend that governmental authorities target their monitoring in these peri-urban areas, so they can see early signs of an outbreak and respond, such as by culling chickens. And then if authorities agree that "discrepancies in sanitation" cause outbreaks, they "might reduce disease risk by increasing efforts to standardize commu-nity infrastructure," Spencer and his colleagues said.

"For example, they might prioritize the introduction of flush toilets more widely in com-munities where access to modern sanitation is currently mixed," they said.

Millions of chickens were slaughtered in Vietnam and elsewhere to stop the avian flu from spreading.

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## 8.2.3 Covid-19

**Rapid urbanization creates ripe conditions for Covid-19 spread. Besides health effects, this also leads to social and political unrest.**

**Muggah 20**

Robert Muggah (principal of The SecDev Group and co-founder of the Igarapé Institute, a think tank focused on urban innovation that has worked with the World Health Organ-isation to map pandemic threats and is supporting governments, businesses, and civil society groups to improve COVID-19 detection, response, and recovery). "Coronavirus in the city: A Q&A on the catastrophe confronting the urban poor." *The New Humanitar-ian*, 1 April 2020,

https://www.thenewhumanitarian.org/interview/2020/04/01/coronavirus-cities-urban-poor

Cities are vulnerable both to the direct and indirect effects of COVID-19. For example, cities with a higher proportion of elderly and inter-generational mingling are especially at risk of higher infection, hospitalisation, and case fatality rates. This explains why the pandemic has been so destructive in certain Italian, Spanish, and certain US cities in Florida and New York where there is a higher proportion of elderly and frequent travel and interaction between older and younger populations. By contrast, early detection, prevention, and containment measures such as those undertaken in Japanese, South Ko-rean, and Taiwanese cities helped flatten the curve. Yet even when health services have been overwhelmed in wealthier cities, they tend to have more capable governments and more extensive safety nets and supply chains to lessen the secondary effects on the economy and market.

Many cities in Africa, South and Southeast Asia, and Latin America are facing much greater direct and indirect threats from the COVID-19 pandemic than their counterparts in North America, Western Europe, or East Asia. Among the most at-risk are large and secondary cities in fragile and conflict-affected countries such as Afghanistan, Colombia, DRC, Iraq, Myanmar, Nigeria, Somalia, South Sudan, Syria, and Venezuela. There, health surveillance and treatment capacities are already overburdened and under-resourced. While the populations tend to be younger, many are facing house-holds that are already under- or malnourished and the danger of comorbidity is significant. Consider the case of Uganda, which has one ICU bed for every one million people (compared to the United States, which has one ICU bed for every 2,800 people). Specific categories of people – especially those living in protracted refugee or internal

displacement camps – are among the most vulnerable. There are also major risks in large densely populated cities and slums such as Lagos, Dhaka, Jakarta, Karachi, Kolkata, Manila, Nairobi, or Rio de Janeiro where the secondary effects, including price shocks and repressive police responses, as well as explosive protests from jails, could lead to social and political unrest.

## It's an existential threat to slums and Africa writ large.

### Sanderson 20

David Sanderson (Professor and Inaugural Judith Neilson Chair in Architecture, UNSW), "Coronavirus an 'existential threat' to Africa and her

crowded slums," UNSW Newsroom, April 14, 2020,

https://newsroom.unsw.edu.au/news/social-affairs/coronavirus-%E2%80%98existential-threat%E2%80%99-africa-and-her-crowded-slums

The head of the Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (Africa CDC) has warned coronavirus poses "an existential threat to our continent". Evidence from past crises shows not everyone is affected equally; the most vulnerable people invariably suffer the worst. This threat will strike worst at the 53 million-or-so people living in the thousands of dense informal settlements, or slums, that pack sub-Saharan Africa's fast-growing cities. The risk is particularly high in slums because of the combination of poverty and poor planning. Poverty leads to fewer choices – do you spend your money on food or medicine? – and few safety nets. Poor planning, if any, has led to millions of people living in largely neglected overcrowded settlements. Their houses are built of waste materials, with little or no running water, electricity, garbage disposal or sanitation. "Social distancing" is next to impossible when a settlement can have just 380 toilets for 20,000 people. Even before pandemics strike, such places erode the health of residents, causing and worsening ailments that include respiratory diseases. The call from the United Nations is for rich countries to provide more funding for Africa. But rich donor countries are themselves fighting the crisis and are unlikely to focus their attention elsewhere. This leaves Africa in desperate need of resources. For example, Central African Republic, home to nearly 5 million people, has just three ventilators.

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**Informal settlements in African megacities are "off the grid" – social distancing is impossible and soaring excess deaths are a certainty**

**Muggah 20**

Robert Muggah (principal of The SecDev Group and co-founder of the Igarapé Institute, a think tank focused on urban innovation that has worked with the World Health Organ-isation to map pandemic threats and is supporting governments, businesses, and civil society groups to improve COVID-19 detection, response, and recovery). "Coronavirus in the city: A Q&A on the catastrophe confronting the urban poor." *The New Humanitar-ian*, 1 April 2020,

https://www.thenewhumanitarian.org/interview/2020/04/01/coronavirus-cities-urban-poor

Muggah: According to the UN, there are about 33 megacities with 10 million or more people. There are another 48 cities with between five and 10 million. Compare this to the 1950s when there were just three megacities. Most of these massive cities are located in Africa, Asia, and Latin America. Many of them are characterised by a concentrated metropolitan core and a sprawling periphery of informal settlements, including shanty-towns, slums, and favelas. Roughly 1.2 billion people live in densely packed informal settlements characterised by poor quality housing, limited basic services, and poor san-itation. While suffering from stigmas, these settlements tend to be a critical supply of labour for cities, an unsatisfactory answer to the crisis in housing availability and afford-ability. A challenge now facing large cities is that, owing to years of neglect, informal settlements are essentially "off the grid", and as such, difficult to monitor and service.

There are many reasons why large densely populated slums are hotbeds for the COVID-19 pandemic and other infectious disease outbreaks. In many cases, there are multiple households crammed into tiny tenements making social distancing virtually impossi-ble. In Dharavi, Mumbai's largest slum, there are 850,000 people per square mile. Most inhabitants of informal settlements lack access to medical and health services, making it difficult to track cases and isolate people who are infected. A majority of the people living in these areas depend on the services and informal economies, including jobs, that are most vulnerable to termination when cities are shut down and the economy begins to slow. Strictly enforced isolation won't just lead to diminished quality of life, it will result in starvation. A large proportion of residents also frequently suffer from chronic illnesses – including respiratory infections, cancer, diabetes, and obesity – in-creasing susceptibility to COVID-19. These comorbidities will contribute to soaring ex-cess deaths.

All of these challenges are compounded by the systemic neglect and stigmatisation of these communities by the political and economic elite. Violence has already erupted in Ethiopia, Kenya, India, Liberia, and South Africa as police enforce quarantines. In Brazil, drug trafficking organisations and militia groups are enforcing social distancing and self isolation in lieu of the state authorities. In Australia, Europe, and the United States, racist and xenophobic incidents spiked against people of Asian descent. There is a real risk that governments ramp up hardline tactics and repression against marginalised populations, especially those living in lower-income communities, shanty-towns, and refugee and displaced person camps.

**That turns the affirmative – causes urban poverty, civil**

conflict, and critical infrastructure failure.

**Muggah 20**

Robert Muggah (principal of The SecDev Group and co-founder of the Igarapé Institute, a think tank focused on urban innovation that has worked with the World Health Organ-isation to map pandemic threats and is supporting governments, businesses, and civil society groups to improve COVID-19 detection, response, and recovery). "Coronavirus in the city: A Q&A on the catastrophe confronting the urban poor." *The New Humanitar-ian*, 1 April 2020,

https://www.thenewhumanitarian.org/interview/2020/04/01/coronavirus-cities-urban-poor

Muggah: The most significant threat of the COVID-19 pandemic may not be from the mortality and morbidity from infections, but the political and economic fallout from the crisis. While not as infectious or lethal as other diseases, the virus is obviously devas-tating for population health. It is not just people dying from respiratory illnesses and organ failures linked to the virus, but also the excess deaths from people who are unable to access treatment and care for existing diseases. We can expect several times more ex-cess deaths than the actual caseload of people killed by the coronavirus itself. The lost economic productivity from these premature deaths and the associated toll on health systems and care-givers will be immense.

COVID-19 is affecting urban populations in different ways and at different speeds. The most hard-hit groups are the urban poor, undocumented migrants, and displaced peo-ple who lack basic protections such as regular income or healthcare. Many of these people are already living in public or informal housing in under-serviced neighbour-hoods experiencing concentrated disadvantage. The middle class will also experience

severe impacts as the service economy grinds to a halt, schools and other services are shuttered, and mobility is constrained. Wealthier residents can more easily self-isolate either in cities or outside of them, and usually have greater access to private health alter-natives. But all populations will face vulnerabilities if critical infrastructure – including health, electricity, water, and sanitation services – start to fail. Cut-backs in service pro-vision will generate first discomfort and then outright protest.

Most dangerous of all is the impact of COVID-19 on political and economic stability. The pandemic is generating both supply and demand shocks that are devastating for producers, retailers, and consumers. Wealthier governments will step in to enact quan-titative easing and basic income where they can, but many will lack the resources to do so. As income declines and supply chains dry up, panic, unrest, and instability are real possibilities. The extent of these risks depend on how long the pandemic endures and when vaccinations or effective antivirals are developed and distributed. Govern-ments are reluctant to tell their populations about the likely duration, not just because of uncertainties, but because the truth could provoke civil disturbance. These risks are compounded by the fact that many societies already exhibit a low level of trust and confidence in their governments.

## 8.2.4 Ebola

**Ebola proves – the only reason it wasn't much worse in West Africa was <u>luck</u>.**

**Voice of America 20**

VOA News. "Rural-to-Urban Transition May Explain Viral Outbreaks: Vietnam Study." *Voice of America*, April 06, 2020.

https://www.voanews.com/science-health/coronavirus-outbreak/rural-urban-transition-may-explain-viral-outbreaks-vietnam

Bill Gates' warning

Philanthropist Bill Gates also discussed viruses and the rural-urban contrast in a TED talk that went viral for its seeming prescience. In 2015, he examined an Ebola emergency that killed 10,000 people, mostly in rural areas in West Africa.

"It didn't get into many urban areas, and that was just luck," he said. "If it had gotten into a lot more urban areas the case numbers would have been much larger. So next time we might not be so lucky."

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## 8.2.5 Obesity

**Urbanization creates obesity through <u>lifestyle changes</u>.**

**Amugsi 18**

Dickson Amugsi (PhD, research scientist with extensive experience in public health and epidemiological research in Africa and beyond, of the African Population and Health Research Center). "Scientists have seen a shocking rise in obesity levels in urban Africa over the past 25 years." Quartz, February 3, 2018, https://qz.com/africa/1194268/obesity-is-rising-rapidly-in-africa-say-scientists/

Rapid urbanization and associated changes in people's lifestyle means Africa faces a growing obesity problem. Across the continent the share of the urban population is projected to increase to 50% by 2030 and 60% by 2050.

Increased urbanization is associated with lifestyle changes such as decreased physical activity. This is often accompanied by increased intake of high caloric fast foods and sugar-sweetened beverages. This combination has contributed to the rising burden of obesity in towns and cities in developing countries.

**Data proves --- obesity is rapidly increasing in urbanizing West African nations such as Ghana, Benin, Niger, Ivory Coast, Mali, and Burkina Faso.**

**Amugsi 18**

Dickson Amugsi (PhD, research scientist with extensive experience in public health and epidemiological research in Africa and beyond, of the African Population and Health Research Center). "Scientists have seen a shocking rise in obesity levels in urban Africa over the past 25 years." Quartz, February 3, 2018, https://qz.com/africa/1194268/obesity-is-rising-rapidly-in-africa-say-scientists/

Obesity in Africa

To understand the scale of the obesity problem in Africa, we analyzed demographic and health survey data from 24 African countries over 25 years. Such data are collected every five years in the developing countries. We found that not only was obesity on the rise, but that it is high among urban African women aged between 15 and 49 years.

The analysis shows increases in obesity levels in all 24 countries over the 25 year period. The increases were statistically significant in 17 countries. Based on the latest surveys we

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found that four countries had an obesity prevalence that was above 20% while the rest ranged between 10% and 19% among urban women of reproductive age in the countries studied.

Comparing these data with earlier surveys it is clear that obesity levels among urban women have worsened in the past two-and-a-half decades.

Our study found significant differences between Africa countries. In the latest survey Egypt has the highest prevalence of obesity by far. Two out of every five Egyptians (39%) are obese, followed by Ghana at 22%.

 Egypt and Ghana also experienced a significant increase in obesity over the past 25 years — from 34% to 39% (13% increase) in Egypt and 8% to 22% in Ghana (65% increase). The increase in obesity doubled in Kenya, Benin, Niger, Rwanda, Ivory Coast and Uganda, while Zambia, Burkina Faso, Mali, Malawi and Tanzania experienced a three-fold in-crease.

While the prevalence of obesity in these countries is lower than Egypt's or Ghana's, the rate of acceleration is alarming. Should these trends persist, obesity levels in these countries may reach the levels of those in Egypt and Ghana.


**That has serious public health consequences.**

**Amugsi 18**

Dickson Amugsi (PhD, research scientist with extensive experience in public health and epidemiological research in Africa and beyond, of the African Population and Health Research Center). "Scientists have seen a shocking rise in obesity levels in urban Africa over the past 25 years." Quartz, February 3, 2018, https://qz.com/africa/1194268/obesity-is-rising-rapidly-in-africa-say-scientists/

Obesity is a serious public health problem because it significantly increases the risk of chronic diseases such as cardiovascular disease, type-2 diabetes, hypertension, coronary heart diseases as well as certain cancers. It also puts considerable strain on healthcare and social resources.

Why obesity is a problem

A person is considered to be obese if they weigh more than 20% over their ideal weight. It is more precisely defined as body mass index of 30 or more.

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For women of reproductive age, the consequences of being obese are more serious. Stud-ies have shown that maternal obesity is bad for both the mother and the unborn child. It can lead to higher rates of miscarriage, still-births and congenital anomalies.

Obesity can also result in gestational diabetes, which is marked by high blood sugar levels during pregnancy. These usually disappear after delivery. Another inherent risk is pre-eclampsia, a condition that affects some pregnant women and usually sets in 20 weeks into pregnancy.

Obesity during pregnancy can also affect health later for both mother and child, includ-ing increased risk of heart disease, hypertension and diabetes. Children of obese moth-ers also have a risk of future obesity.

And obesity is associated with decreased contraceptive efficacy and also impacts nega-tively on normal vaginal delivery.

## 8.2.6 Urban Transition

**Urban <u>transitions</u> make the spread of diseases likely – Vietnam study proves and can be modeled elsewhere.**

### Voice of America 20

VOA News. "Rural-to-Urban Transition May Explain Viral Outbreaks: Vietnam Study." *Voice of America*, April 06, 2020.

https://www.voanews.com/science-health/coronavirus-outbreak/rural-urban-transition-may-explain-viral-outbreaks-vietnam

Vietnam has a possible lesson for the world as the global community copes with the COVID-19 emergency — monitor the places where odds of an outbreak are highest. Research indicates these are not the most urban or the most rural areas, but rather those that are in transition.

Scholars from the East-West Center in Hawaii based this assessment on a review of Vietnam's response to an avian flu outbreak in 2003. In researching that outbreak, the scholars found that infection rates were highest in areas that were in the process of ur-banization, and thus had a mix of conditions, such as different rates of toilet access and diverse bird populations near national highways.

Thus, governments may have higher odds of detecting a viral outbreak early and effi-ciently if they monitor such urbanizing areas, say James Spencer, Sumeet Saksena and Jefferson Fox, all senior Fellows at the Center, which is a nonprofit organization for research and education.

"On a practical level, information on the link between urban development and disease outbreaks can help government agencies identify which locations are most likely to ex-perience an outbreak of avian influenza so that prevention efforts can be less costly, more targeted, and more effective," the Fellows wrote in a joint analysis April 1 for the Center.

They added, "The concepts and methodology that were developed for this study could easily be adapted to many other disease threats, ranging from SARS, Ebola, and dengue fever to the current pandemic of COVID-19."

The authors were referring to a study, first done in 2017, which identified regions of Vietnam that were at risk of infection because as they urbanized, they had uneven levels of sanitation and a high chance of interaction between humans and animals.

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Those factors are relevant for the coronavirus in 2020 because some scientists believe that today's disease originated in a transmission from animals to humans in China, which borders Vietnam and shares its experience of an uneven transition to urbaniza-tion.

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# 8.3 Ruralism

## 8.3.1 Sustainability Impact

**The impact is sustainability. Rural development is essential to global sustainable development.**

### Hinduja 20

Shanu Hinduja (Chair of Hinduja Bank and Co-Chair, United Nations Global Accel-erator). "After COVID-19, a rural

revolution can drive sustainable recovery." *World Economic Forum*, 09 Jun 2020,

https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2020/06/after-covid-19-we-need-a-rural-revolution-to-drive-a-sustainable-future/

After coronavirus, nothing less than a revolution in rural sustainable development can prevent another crisis.

Like our ancestors, we must learn to heed the call of the land, the rhythm of the seasons, the social bonds that hold us together. Developed nations and the developing world must value their farmers, healers and teachers. This virus has shaken the very founda-tions of our societies. How we build on those foundations is up to all of us.

In developing countries in particular, where the collapse in commodity prices, tourism and remittances has already had a devastating impact, the virus has exposed a genuine threat to food security through its disruption of international supply chains. The United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) found that the pandemic will signif-icantly increase risks to food security and hinder humanitarian assistance operations. Even before the virus struck, at the end of 2019 the Global Network Against Food Crises found that 135 million people across 55 countries and territories experienced acute food insecurity.

When this virus passes, we will have an opportunity to remake the world. To build sustainable, resilient and harmonious societies, we must begin with the food on our tables – where it comes from, how it reaches us, and what it means to us. No one should live with the fear that they or their family will go hungry. No one should fear that the food and drink on which they live could put their health in danger. Our gardens of flowers could also accommodate fruits and vegetables.

It must start with education, which goes further in shaping the world of the future than any other intervention. The next generation of workers, political leaders and opin-

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ion formers must be trained and literate in the new priorities for the post-virus world. We must value agriculture, horticulture, hygiene and caring skills above all else. That should be reflected in our children's curricula and educational funding. As co-chair of the UN Global Accelerator Programme, I want to use this platform to encourage young entrepreneurs to take up this mantle.

National governments, including Switzerland's, will need to create attractive schemes for students from different walks of life to attract them to semi-urban and rural devel-opment areas.

The role of semi-urban and rural communities in sustainable development is not a new agenda. My own father, S. P. Hinduja, was among the first to champion this concept at the UN, and I picked up the theme when I addressed the UN General Assembly in 2014. In countries like India, we urged Governments and development agencies to build and develop semi-urban and rural communities centred around the family. As we navigate this crisis, a rural revolution can point the way to a sustainable future. It is vital that those privileged to have had an international education return to their communities to help with this work.

## 8.3.2 Urbanization Bad

**We need a reversal of urbanization and greater connection with the food supply. It's essential for self-sufficiency in domestic food production.**

### Hinduja 20

Shanu Hinduja (Chair of Hinduja Bank and Co-Chair, United Nations Global Accel-erator). "After COVID-19, a rural

revolution can drive sustainable recovery." *World Economic Forum*, 09 Jun 2020,

https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2020/06/after-covid-19-we-need-a-rural-revolution-to-drive-a-sustainable-future/

Developing skills in farming and a move towards self-sufficiency in domestic food pro-duction must be at the centre of every country's plan for a sustainable recovery. This will require a reversal of previous trends towards ever greater urbanization and detachment from our food supply. UN research shows that as farming systems have modernised and intensified, the amount of land available for farming has been growing ever more slowly. On current trends, arable land will grow at a rate of 0.4% in countries for which data is available, despite improvements in irrigation and farming technology.

Qu Dongyu, director-general of the FAO, has already called on nations to "strengthen lo-cal production and shorten food supply chains". Noting the potential for improved tech-nological infrastructure to improve agricultural efficiency, Qu says: "The crisis opens an opportunity to accelerate food system transformation... New business models are needed. It is the time to speed-up e-commerce in agriculture and food systems across the globe."

Switzerland's world-leading private banking sector can and must take the lead here and provide much-needed financing in this area. I have instructed my bank, Hinduja Bank Switzerland, to develop this field so that it may become a reality for our clients across the world with India as our starting point.

### 8.3.3 AT: Growth

**Rural development is compatible with economic growth.**

### Hinduja 20

Shanu Hinduja (Chair of Hinduja Bank and Co-Chair, United Nations Global Accel-erator). "After COVID-19, a rural

revolution can drive sustainable recovery." *World Economic Forum*, 09 Jun 2020,

https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2020/06/after-covid-19-we-need-a-rural-revolution-to-drive-a-sustainable-future/

Rural development and lower population density can be compatible with continued economic growth and sustainability. Developing agricultural infrastructure will create employment opportunities across the skills spectrum and will sustainably deploy the natural capital of less-developed countries. My father's visionary approach of so many years ago has today become the reality and the truth of our future.

As we all suffer at the hands of a common enemy, we must show compassion for one another – and consider what it is we value in society. We must call on national leaders and the heads of international organisations to clear their minds, listen to nature, and reflect on what we have learned in this crisis. Home to the WHO, WTO and so many other international bodies and financial institutions coordinating a response to this cri-sis, Switzerland will have a central role in building a new understanding.

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# 8.4 AT: Economy

## 8.4.1 Capitalism Turn

**Turn --- emergence of an African entrepreneurial class only paves the way for capitalist exploitation of African governments and peoples, exacerbating inequality.**

**Chiwanza 20**

Takudzwa Hillary Chiwanza (Writer at The African Exponent). "This is How China and the West are

Recolonizing Africa." *The African Exponent*, September 9, 2020.

https://www.africanexponent.com/post/7838-this-is-how-china-and-the-west-are-recolonizing-africa.

When Amilcar Cabral delivered his speech at the Tricontinental Conference in Havana, Cuba in 1966, he warned that the attainment of independence was not the end of im-perialism. The Conference was a gathering of the people from Asia, Africa, and Latin America. The purpose of the gathering was to address the struggle against colonialism and imperialism faced during the Cold War. He also referred to the "struggle against our own weaknesses," arguing that Africa's educated elite had to be wary of filling the bourgeoise shoes worn by white colonizers.

He advocated for what he termed "class suicide," for any revolution to make meaning for its people. In contemporary times, Africa finds itself at the mercy of global capital as they are being recolonized again by China, Russia, Europe, and America. This time, the recolonization is taking place with the full assent of Africa's leadership – the political and business elite.

Kwame Nkrumah, the first leader of independent Ghana, warned against the emergence of neocolonialism. He indicated that this is where the former colonizer of a particular territory still exercises control over that territory. He made a referral to South Vietnam, whose former imperial power was France, but that power was later exercised by the United States especially during the Vietnam War.

Neocolonial control may be exercised by syndicates of financial interests which are not specifically identifiable with any particular State. As such, foreign capital is used in the less developed parts of the world for exploitation and not development. Financial power is used to enrich the already rich while the poor continue to suffer. Nkrumah said that a State under the grip of neocolonialism is "not a master of its destiny." He unequivocally stated that neocolonialism is the worst form of imperialism.

Nkrumah termed neocolonialism as the last stage of imperialism. He was concerned that the independence of African countries would be reduced to mere "flag indepen-dence." He noted that there wouldn't be the true economic liberation of the African peoples.

With neocolonialism, African leaders do not necessarily derive their authority to gov-ern from the will of the people. But they get this from the approval of their neocolonial masters. This explains why African leaders are desperate for attention from the United States and European countries. It is as if they do not have an agency. They have an over-whelming desire to please foreign capital by entertaining private foreign firms. These African leaders have little interest in developing education, transport, healthcare, hous-ing, water supply so that these become affordable and reliable for their people.

A worrying feature of neocolonial states is their inability to refuse foreign aid. Nkrumah warned that aid to a neocolonial state is a "revolving credit, paid by the neo-colonial master. It passes through the neo-colonial State and returns to the neo-colonial master in the form of increased profits."

Nkrumah was against the notion of unregulated forms of aid, trade, and foreign direct investment. This is despite that poverty soared, and the wellbeing of Africans was ne-glected. Aid has done nothing to Africa. It has regressed the organic growth of the continent. Aid has created dependence in Africa as if the continent cannot produce its solutions. It has become an avenue for the leaders to spread and live their neoliberal agendas through egregious, unabated corruption.

Africa has become a home of extreme forms of capitalism spread by foreign capital, which are destructive on the welfare of the people as well as their collective national con-sciousness. Although this hyper-capitalism is gradually being eschewed in the global north countries where it originated.

The leaders keep courting foreign capital in the hopes that promoting free-market ide-ologies will make economic problems disappear. This is done to get the support of such neocolonial masters. The same private firms who are courted to "invest" in Africa do more damage to the continent than any good. They pay local workers low wages and salaries, while at the same time leaving a devastating trail of environmental degrada-tion. They influence policy making to reduce the regulatory role of governments so that such policies are favorable to them. Perhaps this is what is now termed as "ease of doing business."

**The impact is Western and Chinese neocolonialism of the continent.**

### Chiwanza 20

Takudzwa Hillary Chiwanza (Writer at The African Exponent). "This is How China and the West are

Recolonizing Africa." *The African Exponent*, September 9, 2020.

https://www.africanexponent.com/post/7838-this-is-how-china-and-the-west-are-recolonizing-africa.

The debt trap is getting serious too, and it is not a secret that China influences a lot of decision making among Africa's politicians. For example, the $4 billion Addis Ababa-Djibouti Railway ended up costing Ethiopia nearly a quarter of its total 2016 budget.

China is seeking control of mining assets as collateral for Zambia defaulting on its loan payments. China has helped Zambia with electricity supply as well as several road construction projects. Uganda is also a victim of Chinese purported benevolence. The 51-kilometer expressway from Kampala to Entebbe Airport built by the Chinese Com-munications Construction Company (CCCC) cost a mammoth $450 million. This debt is footed by Ugandan taxpayers.

Zimbabwe is also selling away the country to global capital to China. Recently, the coun-try granted coal mining concessions to several Chinese companies so that they can mine in the heart of Hwange National Park. China is investing in renewable energy projects at home but is encouraging its private firms to hunt for coal abroad. The government is ignoring the potential dangers posed to the environment through their irrational deci-sion. The government and Chinese firms have since been challenged by the Zimbabwe Environmental Law Association so that Hwange National Park can be saved from per-manent, irreparable ecological degradation.

Several African countries are failing to escape the tentacles of Chinese sponsored state capitalism. In the midst of this, western gatekeepers of global capital like the Interna-tional Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank keep giving loans to African countries at the behest of Africa's political elite. For instance, South Africa was recently granted a $4.3 billion loan from the IMF as a response to Covid-19, with the latter saying in return the country must "reform." The reforms refereed to are an instruction to South Africa (and its neighbors) to rigidly follow neoliberalism.

The overtures from America, Europe, and China are not made with altruistic inten-tions. Africa is abundantly blessed with natural resources and these neocolonial mas-ters, spreading their neoliberalism to Africa, want a piece of the cake. As it has always

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been since the advent of colonialism. There is a heavy military presence of foreign pow-ers in Africa as if there is some sort of dystopian anarchy in Africa. The United States has soldiers in Africa, including China, Russia, the United Kingdom, and France. The recolonization of Africa is happening and regrettably, the African leaders are letting this happen right under their noses.

Amilcar Cabral and Kwame Nkrumah words remain true and powerful. Neocolonial-ism in Africa continues to gain momentum, while the people languish in an endless cycle of poverty and conflicts. The new scramble for Africa must not be ignored and cannot be wished away. With neoliberalism in Africa affecting consumerist attitudes and increasing inequality, there must be collective efforts aimed at stopping these for-eign powers from swallowing up the continent.

According to Nkrumah, the grim reality is that Africa will cease being a master of its destiny if this neocolonialism, aided with the unabated neoliberalism is not stopped. African governments need to be people-centered economics with an emphasis on pro-viding for social services and not outsourcing these to private firms. Leaders should firmly rejecting foreign aid.

## 8.4.2 Urbanization Link

**Rapid urbanization makes leaders concerned with superficial development to assuage global capital – the impact is the excavation of basic rights such as healthcare, water supply, transport, and housing.**

### Chiwanza 20

Takudzwa Hillary Chiwanza (Writer at The African Exponent). "This is How China and the West are

Recolonizing Africa." *The African Exponent*, September 9, 2020.

https://www.africanexponent.com/post/7838-this-is-how-china-and-the-west-are-recolonizing-africa.

Chinese firms assist African countries with various infrastructural development pro-grams. Especially with the rapid urbanization witnessed in African countries. Many African leaders are concerned with the superficial development that fits well within their neoliberal template to assuage global capital. There are megaprojects unveiled while the people are hungry. They do not have universal access to healthcare, water supply, transport, and housing – basic rights that must be afforded to everyone.

# 8.5 AT: Climate Change

### 8.5.1 Offense

**Turn – urbanization causes pollution and water shortages.**

**Bollyky 19**

Thomas J. Bollyky (director of the global health program and senior fellow for global health, economics, and development at the Council on Foreign Relations (CFR). He is also an adjunct professor of law at Georgetown University). "The Future of Global Health Is Urban Health." *Council on Foreign Relations*, January 31, 2019, https://www.cfr.org/article/future-global-health-urban-health

Pollution is also a threat. Air pollution is the fourth-leading health risk globally, re-sponsible for killing an estimated 6.1 million people prematurely in 2016. Sixteen of the world's twenty most polluted cities are in South Asia.

Many of the cities most exposed to coastal flooding from climate change and suffering water shortages—both of which carry health consequences—are in poor and emerging economies. These cities are located along coasts or in river deltas, which had been benefi-cial for farming and commerce, but now exacerbate the risks of flooding—and therefore of waterborne diseases—for large, poor, and informally housed populations. Many of these cities are also running dry. For example, roughly 90 percent of the Dhaka's water supplies comes from ground reserves that are being fast depleted by the demands of its sixteen million inhabitants.

## 8.5.2 AT: Smart Cities

**African smart cities are conceptually flawed and failure will ensure massive debt.**

**Haas 19**

Astrid R.N. Haas (Senior Country Economist (Cities) International Growth Centre), "African countries are building new cities to meet rapid urbanization even if people won't move," Quartz Africa, October 31, 2019, https://qz.com/africa/1740068/african-countries-keep-building-cities-to-meet-rapid-urbanization/

The myth of smart cities

The current wave of new city building is largely focused on leap-frogging economic de-velopment and moving Africa's cities directly into the age of futuristic, technologically advanced, so-called 'smart cities'. Plans for these types of cities are sprouting up across the continent; from Kenya, Mauritius and Senegal.

Leading the way is Nigeria with five current on-going new city projects, which, when completed, are set to cover a landmass of 25 million square meters. The agenda of new city building is not only being pushed by governments, but by a vast array of construc-tion, real estate and technology companies, who stand to profit from the city construc-tion boom, as well.

Yet these new cities will want to avoid pitfalls of places like Cyberjaya, Malaysia. Cy-berjaya was the Malaysian government's attempt to emulate Silicon Valley and pioneer such a hub in Asia.

Cyberjaya was built on 2,800 hectares of undeveloped land, 40 kilometers south of Kuala Lumpur. The idea behind the city was to create a space where intelligent minds from across the globe could reside comfortably and just concentrate on innovation. Malaysia hoped that its first mover advantage in the smart city arena would attract investors. They also believed that Cyberjaya could be a model for the city of the future.

Yet Cyberjaya has failed to live up to its reputation. In particular, a fundamental design flaw was the lack of understanding that people move to cities not only for the infrastruc-ture but also the amenities, as well as to build networks and to integrate into existing networks. In conceptualizing Cyberjaya, the Malaysian government largely ignored this.

Rather the city was envisaged only for the highly educated elite, who, it was assumed, did not require many further amenities outside a suitable work environment. As a result

of the failure to understand the human aspect of cities, many parts of Cyberjaya have remained vacant to date.

Many of Africa's upcoming "smart cities" exhibit similar conceptualization flaws. Sene-gal's futuristic city Diamniadio, a core part of president Macky Sall's 2035 plan, is meant to be a "city of knowledge". It will comprise an industrial park with entertainment fa-cilities and residential areas. However, when the city is completed, which is intended to be by 2035, it is unlikely that the majority of Senegalese will be able to afford to live there.

An estimated $100 billion is being invested in new city projects across Africa; Diamnia-dio alone will cost the Senegalese government an estimated $2 billion. The assumption is that these investments will pay off. The logic is that these cities will attract the best and the brightest. In turn this should drive productivity increases that ultimately will repay the large loans.

In addition, as the new city of Eko Atlantic City in Nigeria has shown, land prices may increase substantially. So, if the government can capture these through land based taxes, this can help recoup costs too.

But failure invariably comes with large debt bills that African countries cannot afford, and may leave large, unfinished ghost cities in its wake.

**Smart cities are a risky gamble that will likely fail – people won't move to the cities.**

**Haas 19**

Astrid R.N. Haas (Senior Country Economist (Cities) International Growth Centre), "African countries are building new cities to meet rapid urbanization even if people won't move," Quartz Africa, October 31, 2019, https://qz.com/africa/1740068/african-countries-keep-building-cities-to-meet-rapid-urbanization/

As the case of Cyberjaya and other failed new city projects globally demonstrate, suc-cessfully designing new cities from scratch is not easy. Cities are complex systems. They require the necessary infrastructure to function. Silicon Valley has been successful as the infrastructure and regulatory environment has meant firms have clustered and learned from each other, spurring innovation.

But none of this matters without people being willing to live there. And what attracts people into cities are opportunities for social interaction and the socio-economic

networks. In the case of Silicon Valley's success, for example, it's clear that the entrepreneurs employed by the firms themselves care about the business environment as well as the quality of life for themselves and their families.

Building new smart cities, in the hope people will follow, may be a higher-risk gamble that most African governments cannot afford. A surer bet is to study where people are already moving, which means where future urbanization is likely to happen. Laying the foundations for this urbanization to happen in an orderly and well-managed fash-ion, such as delineating basic road systems and investing in basic infrastructure before settlement takes place, as was done in Abuja, will go a long way to harness the potential of Africa's urbanization.