

THE CAUSES AND CONSEQUENCES OF INFORMAL SETTLEMENTS IN ZANZIBAR

By
Mohammed Haji Ali
and
Muhammad Salim Sulaiman

ZANZIBAR FACT SHEET

- Land Area: 2,654 sq. km
- Population: 998,443 (Pop. Census of 2002)
- Main Sectors: Agriculture and Tourism
- GDP per capita: About US \$ 200

INTRODUCTION

- **Definition**
- Informal settlements are defined as residential houses built on “planned” and “unplanned” areas which do not have formal planning approval. They are characterized mostly by the low quality houses and the lack of, or inadequate infrastructure and social services.
- Informal Settlement (IS) has been perceived both as a problem and solution to housing needs
- Recent studies and surveys show that about 70 per cent (272,106) of the urban population in Zanzibar live in informal settlements.

BACKGROUND

PRE-REVOLUTION ERA

- IS, as it is defined today, was not considered by the authority as illegal: residents were “allowed to do just as they liked”
- expansion of trade during the early 19th. century resulted in the booming growth of the population and the town of Zanzibar itself
- In 1923 the gov’t commissioned a study issues related to housing (Lancaster Plan of 1923)
- The Lancaster Plan was followed by the first planning law; the Town and Country Planning Decree, Cap. 85 of 1955, which is still in use today

BACKGROUND (continue.....)

POST –REVOLUTION ERA

- The Revolution of 1964, produced radical changes on the socio-economic and political landscape including the nationalization of all lands in the country
- Distribution of 3-acre plots to “landless” families.
- The new Government adopted a socialist path and embarked on a number of development projects, including housing scheme which aimed at providing decent houses to all inhabitants.
- The Government on its side, turned a blind eye to the burgeoning IS as it still believed that the new housing scheme would eventually absorb the slums or vibanda (huts)

BACKGROUND

POST –REVOLUTION ERA (continue.....)



Block of flats at Michenzani, built immediately after the Revolution.

BACKGROUND (continue.....)

1980s TO EARLY 1990s

• the government of "the Third Phase" prepared and implemented the first ERP (of 1986) which contained a number of neo-classical economic policies, including *trade liberalization, privatization, devaluation, removal of food subsidies and downsizing of the public sector.*

• The Chinese Master Plans

- prepared plans for various neighbourhoods
- The implementation of the Master plans could not produce enough residential plots

This period witnessed a massive growth and expansion of the IS; as areas on the edge of the neighbourhood units, as proposed by the Master Plan were considered as "free zones" and squatting was taking place in an unprecedented fashion

BACKGROUND (continue.....)

MID 1990's TO DATE

- Zanzibar and to a lesser extent other towns, continued to grow largely through the IS.
- A growing change in attitude from outright hostility to some degree of support and help.
- The government has recognized the existence and the role played by the IS as an important arrangement for shelter provision of the poor majority.
- During the late 1990s period a number of policy and planning initiatives have been taken to address the old problems associated with the informal settlements. These measures include the following:

BACKGROUND (continue.....)

MID 1990's TO DATE

The National Land Use Plan (NLUP)

- has identified and proposed settlement growth centres of various levels in order to reduce the growing problem of rural – urban migration

The Zanzibar Sustainable Project (ZSP)

- it identified uncontrolled urban development as a major issue for intervention.

Sustainable Management of Land and Environment (SMOLE) Project

- has identified squatter development as one of the major land and environmental related problems

Poverty Reduction Plan

- focuses on reduction of rural-urban migration as a main cause and a result of poverty at an individual level

National Housing Policy

- principal interventions is to improve the existing informal housing stock

Local initiatives

- local people own initiatives by introducing a sort of "informal planning" in various residential areas.

MAJOR CAUSES OF THE INFORMAL SETTLEMENTS

1. URBANIZATION – a driving force

The urban population grew from 27000 (20%) in 1948 to 204,774 (32%) during 1988 and climbed further to reach 391,519 (40%) in 2002.

- Many new in-migrants do not bother to apply for res. Plots
- Most of the IS have been established by the new comers

2. LAND RELATED ISSUES

- Development control mechanisms
 - Confusion on Municipal and Master Plan boundaries
 - Overlapping of responsibilities/authorities (ZMC, DoSUP, DCs, Local authorities)

MAJOR CAUSES OF THE INFORMAL SETTLEMENTS

2. LAND RELATED ISSUES (continue.....)

- Distribution of 3-acre plots
- Inadequate formal land distribution
 - Only 20 – 30 % of demand is met by DoLR
- Lack of resources
 - Human and finance
- Rigid/unrealistic planning standards
 - building codes vs average income (Shs.500000/2100)
- Law Vs Practice on land ownership
 - ZILEM intervention in 1991

MAJOR CAUSES OF THE INFORMAL SETTLEMENTS (continue.....)

3. POVERTY (at individual level)

- Low income (US \$ 200 p.a)
- Plot in planned areas extremely expensive (US \$ 4000 – 5000)
- a vicious circle is created whereby poverty leads to informal settlements and informal settlements breed poverty

4. SOCIO-CULTURAL FACTOR

- Many feel comfortable living in IS
- Perception of traditional "swahili life"
- High fencing walls
- Planned areas considered as rich men residence
- Surveys show residents feel secured in IS

MAJOR EFFECTS OF THE INFORMAL SETTLEMENTS

- **Pollution of Water Sources**

- ground water sources
- outbreak of waterborne diseases

- **Deforestation**

- shrinkage of water catchments
- reduced amount of ground water

- **Pollution from Solid and Liquid Wastes**

- lack of proper system of waste mgt
- waste water from domestic uses
- ground water and marine environ.
- major causes of waterborne diseases

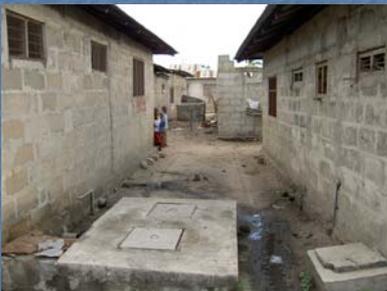
MAJOR EFFECTS OF THE INFORMAL SETTLEMENTS

(continue.....)



Good agricultural land is being encroached by settlement

MAJOR EFFECTS OF THE INFORMAL SETTLEMENTS (continue.....)



Haphazard disposal of domestic waste waters

Major Effects of the Informal Settlements

(continue.....)



Pollution from domestic waste water

MAJOR EFFECTS OF THE INFORMAL SETTLEMENTS (continue.....)

- **Flooding**

- blockage of natural water ways
- high housing density makes natural seepage of storm water difficult due to high share of sealed land
- soil erosion and land slides
- create big paddles that become breeding places for mosquitoes

- **Encroachment of Good Agricultural Land**

- 70% of pop. dependent on agriculture
- between 1977 – 1994 the Zanzibar Town has expanded by 2100 hectares
- loss of agric. land means decrease on crop production

MAJOR EFFECTS OF THE INFORMAL SETTLEMENTS (continue.....)



Domestic refuses scattered around settlement

Major Effects of the Informal Settlements

(continue.....)



Natural waterway being invaded by settlement

Major Effects of the Informal Settlements (continue.....)



Good agricultural land is being encroached by settlement

MAJOR EFFECTS OF THE INFORMAL SETTLEMENTS (continue.....)

• Accessibility

- lack of access is a common problem caused and experienced by residents in IS
- residents tend to build almost 100% of plot size
- difficulty to provide roads and other social services
- movement of people and services is very restricted
- residents have to walk long distance for services like health, education, transport etc

MAJOR EFFECTS OF THE INFORMAL SETTLEMENTS (continue.....)



Houses built close to each other make accessibility difficult

MAJOR EFFECTS OF THE INFORMAL SETTLEMENTS (continue.....)



Residential houses in flood prone area

CONCLUSION

- As urban population grows the housing needs will continue to increase, forcing more agricultural land to be taken by human settlements.
- The pursuit of the urban biased policies embodied in the IMF/WB inspired structural adjustment programmes, have actually accelerated and not reversed the rural – urban migration trend.
- Likewise the conventional spatial planning approaches have not resulted in the desired or expected outcomes in terms of, among other things, orderly growth of human settlements and pre-empt of the IS.
- The basic problems with these planning approaches have been an inappropriate conception of space as somehow separable from other dimensions of society, economy and policy, together with the lack of political will to restructure and distribute power.

CONCLUSION (continue.....)

•) Comprehensive rural development policies backed up with a sound decentralization programme offer a glimmer of hope for the deceleration of rural-urban influx and eventually the slow growth of the urban IS.

This state of affairs calls for:

- ◆ change on both approaches and attitudes. The authorities necessarily need to appreciate and offer support to the local people who are attempting to plan for and by themselves.
 - ◆ the ongoing informal or socially regulated planning processes have to be integrated into the existing legal system.
 - ◆ upgrading and formalization of the informal settlements in order to provide important services and security of tenure to the poor majority.
 - ◆ any policy or planning intervention will need to go hand in hand with the poverty reduction strategies (2003)
-

