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**Demolition, Homelessness and Citizens' Deprivation
in African Cities: Democratising Urban Space
Through Polycentric Governance**

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Introduction

Sub-Saharan Africa has long been one of the least developed and least urbanized regions of the world with most sub-Saharan African economies still heavily dependent on subsistence agriculture. Nevertheless, the region has absorbed relatively high rates of urban growth over the past 50 years. In 1950, only 15% of the Africa population was living in towns or cities, while 39.9% lived in urban areas in 2000 (United Nations 2002; Satterthwaite et. al. 2010:2812). By 2030, about 53% of Africa's population is expected to be living in urban areas (Cohen 2004:39).

Regardless, given that a large fraction of the Africa population will reside in small towns and cities in the near future, urban development planning for such communities should continue to be a top priority (Cohen 2004:45). The growth of cities together with the rapid increase in urban populations has meant that peri-urban areas are growing much more quickly than formal urban centres. Low levels of services such as water supply and sanitation are the result. The lack of these services threatens not only the health and the environment of people in peri-urban areas, but also that of people living in formal urban areas (Mulenga et. al. 2004; McGranahan 2007; Osumanu et. al. 2010:vi). With this urbanization rate and trend, the present quantity and quality of infrastructures and services that are inadequate will become more acute and worsen urban environmental degradation in the continent. For example, less than 15 percent of the septage generated in Accra is effectively treated (Government of Ghana 2007).

Urban Environmental Poverty (UEP), an off-shoot of urban environmental degradation, is predicated upon poor governance. In spite of the rapidly growing urban population in Africa (at 3.6 growth rate, the highest among world regions) (Cohen 2004:28), infrastructures that are incentives for entrepreneurial development and nerves of urban economy are increasingly deteriorating. As expected, cities in Africa are not serving as engines of growth and structural transformation. Instead they are part of the cause and a major symptom of the economic and social crisis that have enveloped the continent (World Bank 2000:130; Cohen 2004:34). Consequently, the majority of the urban poor have ended up building their own water and sanitation facilities which are often of poor quality due to lack of support from the local authorities (Osumanu, et. al. 2010:1). These diverse coping mechanisms conflict with one another and some of them are affecting urban beauty and healthy conditions as manifested in uncollected solid waste, urban ghetto, proliferation of slum, squatter settlements, erection of structures on waterways that cause flooding, over-stretched, or non-existent sanitation services, drainage, etc.

Since UEP reduces urban beauty, leadership tends to use force in addressing such urban problems without consulting the citizens. Whereas good governance entails a common thought between the leadership (elected) and the followership (electorate) with citizens playing active role in decision making, the response of African leaders to squatter settlements and slums usually takes unidirectional approach with exclusionary tendency – eviction and demolition. Eviction and demolition generate adverse consequences on socio-economic wellbeing of cities’ dwellers as citizens are killed and property destroyed.

This confirms that African governments have no respect for the rights of their citizens to shelter as demonstrated by several cases of demolition and forced eviction of citizens. In Angola, 5,000 homes were destroyed (Croese 2010), while over 75,000 houses in the Nigeria’s capital, Abuja were demolished (Harris 2008; Ogun 2009). In Ghana about 10 bulldozers were used in one demolition exercise along with the police-military team that was so cavalier and brutal in their approach to disperse protesters, while a number of people sustained various degrees of injuries, including some journalists. In Kenya, police used teargas to disperse protesting traders who claim they lost property worth millions of shillings during the demolition (Kenyan Business News July 2010), while about 9,600 people have been left homeless, after they had stayed up to 20 - 30 years in their communities where their children and grandchildren have grown up (Mulama, 10 March 2004). The government of South Africa also deployed violence, demolished shacks and murdered its citizens between September and October 2009 in Durban (Neocosmos 2009). Are these actions human and democratic?

In spite of appalling performance of African state, Self-Governing Institutions¹ (SGIs) or people-centred community institutions have through shared strategies provided answers to most local development questions which the state has been dodging over the years. Rather than waiting for the local government authorities, that are closest to them (and with a lot of money), the local people, through self-organizing and self-governing capabilities, have planned and executed several social services that directly touch the lives of their people across Africa (Wunsch and Olowu 1995; Sawyer 2005; Gellar 2005; Tamuno 2009; Akinola 2008b, 2009b, 2010a, 2011a,b,c). It is only at this level of common pool resources that some

¹ A self-governing institution (SGI) is defined as an institution crafted by the people, without external interference, in an attempt to solve their common problems within their locality or community. It is also called a people-oriented, people-centered, or community-based institution (E. Ostrom 1990, 1999; E. Ostrom, J. Walker, and R. Gardner 1992; Wunsch and Olowu 1995; McGinnis 1999; V. Ostrom 1994, 1997, 2000; Ayo 2002; V. Ostrom and E. Ostrom 2003; Olowu and Wunsch 2004; Akinola 2005d; Sawyer 2005). These institutions, on the basis of their origins, are classified into two broad categories: indigenous and endogenous (see for details, Akinola 2008b:95; 2009b:87).

achievements have been realized. This is the doctrine of polycentricity which provides alternative strategies to address problems of daily existence at the grassroots level in the face of dismal and appalling performance of the modern state institutions in Africa (Akinola 2008b, 2009b, 2010a:71).

Using the Institutional Analysis and Development (IAD) framework, this paper employs empirical data to analyse the missing links between urban managers and urban residents in Angola, Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria and South Africa. The paper found that urban governance structures in the five countries are centralized and deviate from planning norms and people-centred governance. Consequently, citizens are repressed, killed, rendered homeless and made to suffer loss of socio-economic opportunities, while children education was greatly affected. The paper argues that, for urban governance to benefit urban residents, it has to proceed from the people and be guided by them in decisions on all urban matters, including planning and modification of plans.

This paper considers critical the place of a shared vision of both how the world works and how we would like the world to be. Analysis and modeling appropriate to the vision via new institutional arrangements for implementation are also very crucial for resolving the crisis of demolition and evictions in African cities. The new institutional mechanism would enable African state to reposition urban managers to deliver inclusive housing policies and strategies as well as public services like healthcare, sanitation, education, water supply, electricity, roads and poverty reduction incentives. At the same time, appropriate rural industrialization and employment generation programmes that can stem the tide of rural-urban migration should be set up. The paper considers imperative the application of pragmatic and problem-solving home-grown models to the identified challenges as well as political economic factors that significantly determine citizens' welfare in African cities.

In order to accomplish people-centred urban service delivery, this paper, therefore, adopts a polycentric governance system, which emphasizes high level of public accountability, locality and the control of community affairs by the people (Olowu 1999:213). Polycentric governance also relate with polycentric planning. While polycentric planning is a process, polycentric governance is a system that takes effect after planning and implementation of any project. Polycentric planning can be defined as the process of ordering the use of physical, human and institutional resources as well as engaging the citizens in contractual relations with the public authority (Akinola 2009b:83, 2010a:58, 2011a:7).

This paper, therefore, is concerned with a sort of systemic, cordial and collegial relationships between urban poor and their governments in socio-economic and political

decisions. Polycentric Governance and Poverty Reduction Strategy (PGPRS) provides incentives for synergizing the efforts of the state and community institutions towards poverty reduction starting from community/local level. It is a multi-layers and multi-centres institutional arrangement that connect the stakeholders synergistically to resolving urban environmental crisis. The new institutional mechanism will enable the people to have a robust political dialogue at federal/central, state/provincial and local levels in order to reposition urban councils to effectively manage urban environment. Using PGPRS, this paper designs an African Polycentric Urban Governance Model (APUGM) capable of mainstreaming citizens-centred institutions in urban areas into socio-economic and techno-political decision making so that citizens (including the urban poor) can participate effectively in decisions that concern their lives, thus entrenching good urban governance, citizens-centred planning and development in Africa.

The paper is organized into six sections with the first section containing the introduction, while the second part discusses the problematics that surround demolition and evictions. The third section presents the theoretical points of entry of the argument of the paper. The fourth part discusses the resilience of self-governing institutions (SGIs) in the governance of urban affairs in Africa. The fifth section presents polycentric governance and new urban governmentality, while conclusion is drawn in section six.

The Problematics: Demolition and Forced Eviction of Citizens in African Cities

On October 31, 2011 the world's population will be 7 billion of which 1.8 billion will be young people, 90% of them in the developing world, especially Africa. Half of these will be young women, 50 percent of whom will be in vulnerable situations, living without access to education or health (D'Almeida 2011). The miserable condition of lack of basic services in Africa queries governance and people-centred development. The bane of good governance and development in Africa has its direct roots in colonialism and indirectly predicated on the failure of post-colonial leaders to study, understand and plan for urbanization and urban areas after independence. The new urban system reflected a colonial economic framework that emphasized the exploitation of African resources (Stren & Halfani 2001). Perhaps the most obvious characteristic of colonial urban planning was the partitioning of urban space into two highly uneven zones: a "European" space that enjoyed a high level of urban infrastructure and services, and an "indigenous" space that was marginally serviced (Stren & Halfani 2001:468). Different planning standards were specified for the various segments of the city with physical planning and infrastructure provision concentrated in the European or

Government Reservation Areas (GRAs), while African Residential Areas or Poor Reservation Areas (PRAs) were neglected (Akinola 1992b).

After independence, the population of many African cities grew rapidly, basically in the absence of significant industrialization. City growth was fueled both by high levels of national population growth and high spatial mobility. The availability of large numbers of jobs in a newly formed public sector plus better access to health, education and other social services, and an urban bias in terms of trade between primary products and manufactured goods contributed to make urban life attractive. A combination of centripetal and centrifugal forces generates uncontrolled urbanization that leads to mass movement of people from rural to urban areas (Cohen 2004:45).

By obeying the prescriptions of International Financial Institutions (IFIs), African-state was forced to retreat from the provision of social services. As expected, the space was avidly occupied by the development NGOs (non-governmental organisations), especially in the 1980s. What citizens once had a right to expect by virtue of the gains of independence was replaced by charitable acts of agencies that were dependent on the support of international aid institutions whose policies were increasingly aligned with those of the IFIs (Manji and O'Coill 2002).

Several studies confirm correlations between urbanisation, environmental problems and urban poverty (Campbell 1989; UNEP 1991; Douglas 1992; Satterthwaite 1993; Onibokun and Faniran 1995; Wratten 1995; World Resources Institute 1997) but the poverty generated in the hinterlands due to the activities of cities growth and urbanisation has not been properly understood. Failure to understand this, invariably, leads to exodus of people from rural areas to few cities, a situation that warrants the development of urban ghettos and slums that house millions of citizens across African cities. The argument is that if government has failed in the first instance, why should the same government evict citizens from their self-help homes in which they had invested their meager resources?

Although poverty in Ghana has usually been described as a rural phenomenon, recent trends show urban overshadowing rural poverty. According to the Ghana Statistical Service (2007), poverty in the Greater Accra Region, the country's most populous city, more than doubled from 5.2 percent in 1999 to 11.8 percent in 2006. In Ghana, at least 50 percent of the population resides in urban areas of which only 18 percent have access to improved sanitation (WHO/UNICEF 2010) and only 30 percent have access to piped water which in most cases is supplied intermittently (Larbi 2006; Osumanu, et. al. 2010:2).

Uncontrolled urbanisation in South Africa generates unprecedented growth of shacks and informal settlements, where migrants live in shacks with serious implications and social consequences. Records show that 2.4 million South Africans live in informal settlements across the country (Ikokwu, 26 June 2007). There are 18 informal settlements throughout the Cape Town region (SABC News June 12, 2007) with approximately 500000 people in the City without access to basic sanitation (Notywala 2011). Recent statistics show that approximately 10.5 million people in South Africa do not have access to basic sanitation services (Notywala 2011).

It is the combination of these environmental health hazards that partly warrant the clearance of urban slums and eviction of citizens from their homes by those in power and misuse public resources at their disposal. Forced evictions remain a common means by which land occupied predominantly by the poor and low-income groups is cleared for redevelopment.

A common denominator of bad governance and trampling on the rights of citizens in most African countries is 'rebuilding by demolition' and forced eviction of citizens from their homes. Most governments subject their citizens to poverty and high level of deprivation and dehumanization through forced eviction. It is true that society is dynamic and infrastructure and urban settings of yesterday may not be adequate for today and tomorrow. But there are minimum standards and methods of renewing urban centre such that the welfare of citizens is not jeopardized. In developed democracies, citizens are involved right from the planning stage to the implementation of any programme that affects them. For example, renewal of urban slums is usually preceded by resettlement scheme that provides accommodation for the affected citizens temporarily or permanently and the citizens are regarded as agents of change in such programmes. The situation is contrary in most African countries where citizens just wake up to see bulldozer at their door steps, ready for demolition on the order of government officials who suppose to protect the interests of citizens in the first instance.

Forced eviction and relocation have been known to inflict serious adverse consequences on victims. Forced resettlement is about the worst thing that can be done to a people - next thing to killing them (Scudder and Colson 1982). The bitter experiences that follow a wake of urban evictions and dislocation are a serious social phenomenon that increase social and psychological "pathology" (Fried 1963). For example, experiences in Seoul, South Korea show that most of the millions evicted between 1960 and 1990 could not afford houses in redeveloped areas (Asian Coalition for Housing Rights 1989). Not only are

community ties broken but family life also suffers in terms of loss of jobs, disruption of children's education, etc as the case in Tel Aviv (Ephraim et. al. 1979).

The International Covenant of Economic and Social Rights, which all countries had ratified, laid down guidelines for carrying out eviction. The guidelines state, among other things, that forced evictions must only occur in exceptional circumstances and provided certain conditions are followed. The conditions include adequate consultation with the persons affected and the provision of alternative resettlement in a safe and appropriate location. Similarly, International human rights law demands that before forced eviction is carried out, States should give to persons affected, the opportunity to challenge the eviction or demolition order and to propose alternatives (Ghana News 2010). Unfortunately, most demolitions across Africa were carried out in defiance of citizens' rights and International Covenant of Economic and Social Rights. It is in the light of the above that this paper considers it imperative to analyse the impact of demolition and forced evictions in selected African countries.

Rebuilding by Demolishing Citizens' Welfare in Angola

In March, 2010 in order to make way for public construction of infrastructure in the city of Lubanga in Angola, riot police killed seven people, destroyed 2,000 homes, while almost 3,000 families were evicted with only 700 tents distributed to provide temporary shelter for some families in Tchavola, where there is no basic sanitation and little access to electricity, food or blankets. In 2009, an estimated 3,000 homes affecting 15,000 people were demolished in the capital city of Luanda (Croese 2010). In spite of the fact that citizens have documents from municipal authorities proving legal residence and compensation for their losses, they were disappointed as the state regarded the people's action as a violation of the Law of the Land (Croese 2010).

According to Samacumbi (2010), there are no detailed information and mathematical rigor to describe the suffering of people in Lubango, Angola (see Picture 1). The 15 days notice was too short for the victims to prepare new shelter. The effects of demolition on people are disastrous and these include: (1) Heavy damage and substantial destruction of people's homes, properties, gardens, businesses, livelihoods, etc; (2) People were concentrated in a camp with tents without the minimum conditions in terms of environmental sanitation that signals epidemics; (3) The "concentration camps" are 10 kilometres from the city center; (4) Some schools had to suspend classes because they were occupied by the homeless (5) Many children were forced to suspend classes because they

were homeless and placed in distant areas of the school where they usually studied; (6) Families slept in the open with small children without food assistance (Samacumbi 2010).

Unfortunately, the governor of the province of Huíla, justifies the evictions as a necessary adherence to the law, which he views as more important than humanitarian considerations. Although, citizens claimed they have documents from municipal authorities that affirmed legal residence and compensation for their losses, they were disappointed by Article 95 of the recently approved Constitution and Article 25 of the Law of Land that confers land as a state property. This action of government attracted opposition from Angolan civil society, other political parties, etc; thus making Angolan civil society and its supporters relevant to the people that government.



Picture 1: An Example of Homelessness Caused by Demolition and Eviction in Angola

Source: "Angola: Mass Evictions Displace Thousands." 22 February 2011.

<http://globalvoicesonline.org/2011/02/22/angola-mass-evictions-displace-thousands/> (Accessed 29/03/2011).

Police Brutality Suppressed Protests against Demolition in Ghana

There were several cases of demolition in Ghana in recent times. Nearly 100 houses in Tuba², Ga South District of the Greater Accra Region, were pulled down on Saturday, December 11th 2010 by a police cum military team, in spite of a court injunction against the

² "Journalist brutalised by police for covering demolition exercise." <http://vibeghana.com/2010/12/12/journalist-brutalised-by-police-for-covering-demolition-exercise/> (Accessed 22/02/2011)

demolition exercise. About 10 bulldozers were brought to the area for demolition, a situation that attracted protest by incensed residents. This attracted the police-military team that was so cavalier and brutal. Quite a number of people sustained various degrees of injuries, including some journalists.

Similarly, the residents of Oblogo-Weija were up in arms in December 2010 against the Ga South Municipality of the Greater Accra region of Ghana over attempts by the assembly to raze down some plush houses (Beeko 2011). A member of the Oblogo Residents Association said:

The lands in question were all bought legally from the Chief of the area. As a result, when it comes to the worse, we would have no alternative than to fight the kind of oppression and cruelty the Weija Municipal intends to inflict upon us. We are ready for war and when they come, we will fight them with whatever tool that we have at our disposal. The tools may be guns, machetes, knives among other offensive objects, we don't give a damn!" (Beeko 2011).

In a related case, a demolition exercise, jointly undertaken by the Tema Metropolitan Assembly (TMA) and the Tema Development Corporation (TDC), in certain parts of the metropolis along the Ashaiman-Nungua main road has attracted public criticism. Most importantly, the exercise attracted the fury of the Member of Parliament (MP) for Tema West, the constituency within which the exercise took place – the government is divided against itself. The demolition exercise was halted (after 16 structures were pulled down) by a massive protest of over 100 landguards who threw stones and other dangerous implements at the police and military personnel on supervision of the barbaric exercise.

It was evident that the 'demolishers' and 'wasters' of citizens' resources did not give ample notice and time to allow owners of the structures to organise themselves properly (Attenkah 2010) in spite of the UN and international guidelines for forced evictions. One thing that is clear is that these demolitions compound the already grave problem of homelessness, inadequate housing and poverty, particularly for women whose right to housing is already not adequately protected.

Bulldozers Drove Eight Month Old Baby into Heavy Downpour in Kenya

Traders at Nairobi's Kangemi market were angered by Council Askaris's action in demolishing their market in the night without prior notice, after they had just settled at the site consequent upon forced eviction out of the roadside market. They engaged police in running battles by taking to the streets blocking the road with stones and logs. In reaction,

police used teargas to disperse the traders who claim they lost property worth millions of shillings during the demolition (Kenyan Business News, July 2010).

A more disturbing case was that of Grace Nduta, mother of an eight months old son, whose shack of cardboard and mud was demolished by bulldozers. All she could do was to cover herself and her son with cellophane and fled into the downpour outside. Along with her were about 4,000 hawkers whose tin-and-wood kiosks were demolished in the open-air stalls located around the city bus station, while the demolishers confiscated clothes and other merchandise. According to the hawkers, they had been at the bus station for 20 years, while the demolition exercises had cost them close to a million shillings (about \$55,000). This action has further menaced the already precarious existence of hundreds of thousands of people in Nairobi, where as many as 45% of the estimated 2 million people in Nairobi live in illegal housing – that is, homes that are substandard or erected on public land (Hiltzik, April 23, 1989). This is a common occurrence and experience every year, in cities all across Africa

Similarly, Kenyan authorities pulled down structures built along railway and power lines in Kibera, a shanty town, on the grounds that the land was illegally allocated for development. Although mansions worth millions of Kenyan shillings owned by key government officials were also demolished, the situation of Leah Kanini, a 15-year-old girl is a case that deserves attention. After having lost her parents to AIDS-related illnesses, she took on the responsibility of caring for her five siblings by selling peanuts to support the household. On Feb. 16, 2004, Kanini returned home to find the family's shack demolished by a government bulldozer. She was confused and with her voice bitter, she said: "I do not know what to do; I do not know where to go" (Mulama, 10 March 2004).

In February, 2004, the first phase of demolitions, without notice, took place in Kibera, a shanty town which is home to about 700,000 poverty-stricken people, often referred to as Africa's largest slum. About 9,600 people have been left homeless and families sleep outdoors. With 40 days notice for the second phase, residents panicked and approached the court to have that deadline extended. One of the resident laments: "Some of us have been here for over thirty years. Our children and grandchildren have grown up here and we know no other home" (Mulama, 10 March 2004).

Kibera's crisis confirms the failure of government to plan for rapid population growth in the 1980s when the population growth rate was four percent, one of the highest in the world. This shows that the government of Kenya did not live up to the expectation. Despite the weakness on government policies, official reactions on Kibera's demolition only

confirm government insensitivity to citizens' predicaments. The Chief Public Relations Officer for the Ministry of Roads and Public Works asserts:

We are not resettling anyone. There is no meeting that will take place between the government and residents. They will have to move, whether they go to court or not. It is a well known fact that building on road reserves, by-passes, under electricity lines and near railway lines is completely illegal (Mulama, 10 March 2004).

This type of indifferent and apathetic official posture in Kenya is a common experience across Africa, where those in public offices operate with impunity.

Demolition Sacrificed Citizens' Welfare to Urban Beautification in Nigeria

Demolition in Nigerian urban areas is historical. The early experiences of "slum" demolition in Nigeria date back to the 1920s when they were carried out in Lagos by the Lagos Executive Development Board in response to the bubonic plague that broke out at the time. This was followed by the pre-independence demolition which resulted in the celebrated Isale-Eko clearance to give the visiting Queen of England a pleasing view of the area (UNCHS 1993, 2000:57). Between 1973 and 1995, there were not less than 36 cases of demolition with over 369,000 persons displaced across Nigeria (Agbola and Jinadu 1997:274-275).

The demolition of Maroko in 1990, a community that had existed for 18 years is a typical example of the Nigerian government's callous action against its citizens. Maroko, with an estimated population of about 300,000 was one of Nigeria's biggest slum communities. Its location within the heart of Victoria Island, a wealthy residential and commercial area of Lagos, made it an eyesore and, therefore, attractive for clearance in order to give way for property development. Another reason advanced by the government for the clearance was that the occupied land is 1.5 metres above sea level and was, therefore, liable to flooding and complete submergence. What government intended to do was to sand fill the area for infrastructural transformation (Agbola and Jinadu 1997:272, 279, 287).

The then military Governor of Lagos State, ordered (via verbal notice by radio announcement) the demolition of Maroko, giving residents only seven days notice to leave their homes. Within 12 days, in July 1990, the whole community was demolished. However, those evicted took possession of some incomplete government housing estates within the Eti-

Osa area at Ilasan³ and Ikota in Lagos State, where environmental conditions for over 60% evacuees are still very poor (Agbola and Jinadu 1997:284). Government planned to evict them even from these estates but for the intervention of a sustained campaign by members of the public and civil society groups.

During the demolition exercise, excessive violence was brought to bear on the people. Many people suffered various degrees of injuries, including temporary and permanent disabilities. The security operatives exhibited element of bestiality, capitalising on the haplessness of the people to harass, maim, beat, rape and loot in the process. It was on record that twenty (20) women were reportedly raped by the security agents⁴. Victims helplessly watched properties they acquired with their life savings perished in one fell swoop. At the end of the exercise, the entire community was in complete ruins with over 10,000 houses destroyed; about 300,000⁵ people rendered homeless; while schools, businesses, and other properties, as well as families' cohesion were disrupted. Only a police station in the neighbourhood survived the demolition.

Consequently, the "Maroko evictees," filed a suit before the Lagos High Court on July 11, 1990 to challenge the forced eviction and demolition of their homes without following the due process and paying compensation as well as violation of their rights to housing, property, health, family, education and dignity as human beings as guaranteed by several provisions of the Nigeria's constitution. Of the estimated 41,776 landlords displaced from Maroko, only 2,933 (0.07%) were considered for relocation (Newswatch 1990; Agbola and Jinadu 1997:280). Additionally, about 20% of property value was given to the affected landlords (Agbola and Jinadu 1997:288). In a recent follow-up study in 2010, it was found that most of the evictees are yet to be compensated for the destruction of their homes and properties; making them roam the courts in Lagos State in search of justice in the last 19 years.

The Federal Capital Territory, Abuja, Nigeria

In an attempt to have a capital city that is better organized and far less congested, some 800,000 residents from over 24 settlements around Abuja were forcibly evicted from

³ Ilasan, Ikota and Epe communities (located between 5 and 10 kilometers away from former Maroko community) which comprised abandoned uncompleted buildings built by the Lagos state government. The buildings were in various stages of dilapidation (<http://www.frontlinedefenders.org/eco-soc-cul/maraka> - Accessed 08/06/2011).

⁴ <http://www.frontlinedefenders.org/eco-soc-cul/maraka> (Accessed 08/06/2011).

⁵ It should be noted that several among the Maroko had already been evicted twice before. The first instance was the Central Lagos Clearance Scheme in the 1950s (before the visit of Queen Elizabeth), and the second was from the Falomo squatter settlement area in the mid-1960s (UNCHS 1993, 2000:57).

their homes (over 75,000 houses) in the Nigerian capital, Abuja, over a four-year period in the Federal Capital Territory (Harris 2008; Ogun 2009; *Thisday*, April 11, 2008). Many of those removed from their homes between 2003 and 2007 were not given due notice. Some were sprayed with tear gas, while others were beaten. There are over 600 cases in court against the Federal Capital Territory on the ground that the plaintiffs had approval from the same capital authority that destroyed their properties. These widespread evictions have resulted in the massive displacement of hundreds of thousands of people, with disastrous effects on health, education, employment and family cohesion.

For example, the demolition and eviction were compounded with the non-payment of staff salaries and allowances of workers of the Nigeria Telecommunication Limited (NITEL), Abuja from July 2007 to January 2008. The increase in house rents due to demolition exercises made some staff of NITEL to lose their accommodation as they were thrown out of their homes due lack of money to pay rent. Consequently, the workers lived in the open, at the premises of NITEL training school in Zone 6, Abuja.

Demolition as Political Vendetta for Silencing Opposition in South Africa

The government of South Africa was also involved in deployment of violence and murder on its poor citizens that lived in shacks simply because they demanded for inclusive politics. Between September and October 2009 at Kennedy Road, the shack dwellers movement Abahlali baseMjondolo (AbM), an organisation of the poor in Durban, had their homes destroyed by state police for engaging in peaceful protests and advocating peaceful alternatives to the dominant politics. The most important aspect of politics is invented by AbM who discover the need to break from the politics of corruption associated with party politics. AbM is unique in its development of non-state and non-party politics founded on a universal conception of citizenship (Neocosmos 2009).

Policy analysts and observers have viewed the sad occurrence in South Africa as 'not simply a failure of democracy, but a systematic failure of citizenship and of the nation' (Neocosmos 2009). This suggests that local politics in South Africa is run by local mafias that use weapons to repress groups and individuals that attempt to develop local politics founded on basic democratic norms. This aptly captures the failure to address national demands for jobs and housing in a neo-liberal context.

After its destruction in Kennedy Road, the state asserted that AbM was an illegitimate organisation, even though it had mass support in the community and that it was the ruling party (the ANC) and its structures that were legitimate. The overall result is that

the democratic politics of the AbM had become a threat to the patron-client relations. AbM has managed to provide a universal conception of citizenship and the nation where the state has proved itself singularly incapable of doing so.

Although AbM has always been a peaceful and non-violent organisation, the violent attack on Kennedy Road was initially successfully repelled by the community; the police then came in and arrested those that had organised the resistance thus allowing the attack to succeed and the homes of all AbM leaders to be demolished (AbM 2009; Neocosmos 2009).

At the same time, AbM (2009) shows that police engaged more and more in raiding poor communities. The idea here is no longer 'community policing' but policing to instill fear into a community. They knocked down doors as if they are on enemy territory, beat people up (men and women), sometimes arrest people on trumped up charges - and often simply release them a few days later as no charges have been laid. It is an expression of a particular form of state politics akin to the politics of colonialism and apartheid, where a certain section of the community is considered as the enemy. The questions raised here are: Who is the enemy in this case? Is the enemy the urban poor? Is it the organised urban poor? On whose orders are the police acting? (AbM 2009).

Neocosmos (2009) sees this ugly development as a division of the South African population into two broad groups, in which those who have the right to rights are attempting to construct a consensus founded on a state politics of systematic plunder of collective resources and oppression of the poor who have to suffer, not only economically but also by being deprived of the right to rights, and being forced against their will into patronage relations necessary for the former elites to exercise their rights. The situation is quite simply disastrous as citizenship rights have been systematically eroded and people lack the medium to express their grievances. In the words of Allan Boesak "We then begin to fear when there is nothing to fear" (Boesak 1990:398).

This incident, no doubt, queries democratic integrity of South African government. The pertinent question is: Is the South African state a democracy? If yes, is attacking, killing and destroying the homes of the poor part of dividends of democracy? Should demolition and eviction be used as a weapon for silencing political opponents?

Polycentric Governance Perspective on Demolition and Eviction of Citizens

Polycentric governance as a systemic, cordial and collegial relationship between government and community-centred institutions in socio-economic and political decisions entails a common thought and synergy among and between stakeholders in urban areas,

starting from community/local level. It is a multi-layers and multi-centres institutional arrangement and mechanism that enables the people to have a robust political dialogue at federal/central, state/provincial and local levels in order to reposition urban governmental system to deliver public services to the people.

Taking all the five cases together, the methods employed by public officials in carrying out demolition exercises runs counter to the basic principles spelt out in the UN guidelines on development-based evictions and displacements, which enjoins authorities not to allow evictions as well as demolition exercises to take place in bad weather, at night, and by implication at dawn, during festivals or religious holidays, prior to elections, or during or just prior to school examinations and in circumstances that do not afford the victims the opportunity to recover their properties.

Under international human rights law, everyone has a right to adequate housing as a component of the right to adequate standard of living. The right to adequate housing includes, the right to protection against arbitrary or unlawful interference with privacy, family, home, and to legal security of tenure. The international human rights law demanded that the governing authorities must thoroughly dialogue with occupants of places earmarked for demolition and give them ample notice before proceeding to demolish their structures.

Apart from issues of the right to adequate housing, including the right to be free from forced evictions, the right to life and security of the person are human rights which are frequently violated during forced evictions and demolitions. Other human rights concerns that arise, such as lack of due process and access to justice, violence against women including rape and other sexual violence, arise both during the evictions and as a result of the vulnerable situation of those evicted. Additionally, cases of arbitrary and unlawful arrests of residents and human rights defenders who speak out against forced evictions and demolitions in these countries are issues that need to be reflected upon.

The critical issue that needs to be adequately addressed in connection with demolition exercise is the responsibility of public officials who have the duty of monitoring and stopping the construction of illegal structures and who usually play the Ostrich and allow illegal structures to be erected. On the scale of culpability, these officials by their omission in allowing these illegal structures to be constructed in the first place bear the greatest responsibility. They have contributed significantly to the problem of illegal structures across African cities and therefore, should be held responsible. Moreover, the ministries, agencies and utility companies that provide the occupants of these illegal structures with electricity and water without taking steps to find out whether the occupants

had valid building permits must take a share of the blame. Over 600 cases in court in the Federal Capital Territory in Nigeria confirm the high degree of culpability of public officials.

On the part of government, public officials, particularly in Ghana, claimed that the developers resorted to all manner of means to outwit them by working at night or weekends when no official would see them. The officials contended that they did not have enough building inspectors to undertake constant monitoring and before they realised, these unapproved structures were raised. However, none of the officials' defense satisfactorily explains why illegal structures are allowed to be constructed and remain standing for years before they are demolished. These all points to the facts raised by this paper that urban managers in Africa operate with exclusionary tendency as they do not involve the citizens in their daily decisions on urban affairs that concern the people. The citizen should be entitled to treat the various state authorities as one entity and to assume that they collaborate with one another.

An expert view on demolition is also very instructive at this juncture. The Vice President of Ghana Telecom University College (GTUC) views demolition of houses built on water-ways as an ad-hoc measure but not the solution to the perennial flooding of some parts of Ghana. According to him, the flooding would continue to persist unless all institutions began to adhere to quality assurance procedures and regulations. There is the need for the development of new towns and settlements, and building of homes on-lease for the people to curb the haphazard siting of unauthorised structures on water-ways. As a matter of fact, there should be infrastructure to transport rain water to a point which would not create problems for the people. This confirms that government is also culpable in this case in two ways simply by: (1) not designing and implementing comprehensive plans that take account of urbanization and future development and (2) by allowing structures to be built and later demolished after citizens have invested their resources in such structures.

The laxity in the enforcement of planning regulations in these countries and the haste with which evictions are carried out are also worth interrogating. Agbola and Jinadu (1997) observe that under normal circumstances, the statute books on planning regulations should guide the planning processes irrespective of which government is in power. However, in Africa, it has become apparent that the tempo, intensity and effectiveness of urban planning depend on the type of government of the day. Planning officials do nothing to prevent illegal developments or provide low-income groups with legal alternatives – but they will justify an eviction (Agbola and Jinadu 1997:287).

The question often raised is whether urban authorities should wait for a violation of the laws before the regulations are applied? I think the essence of development control is to prevent illegality and ensure compliance with existing regulations and not to wait to rejoice at the calamity of fellow human beings, whose homes are destroyed. And whose interests are the planners serving, those of the public or of the government of the day? What role should planners play in situation like these? What is the status of advocate planning in Africa? Of course, planners are government employees who are expected to work according to the statute books but this happens only as long as it does not infringe upon the interests of the government of the day or its powerful operators. What is more confusing in the Maroko case (and others) is that the government responsible for its demolition had previously issued certificates of occupancy to Maroko residents in 1971; thus, legitimizing their presence (Agbola and Jinadu 1997:288).

How can institutions designed for human society give a month or seven-day quit notice to a person who has resided in a house built through his/her own sweat, for a period of 10 to 20 years or more? The number of quit notice allowed under planning law is inadequate when viewed against the multiplicity of problems confronting those who were evicted. How do we explain the demolition exercises were carried out at dawn in Ghana and at night in Kenya where victims lost all their personal belongings and other valuable property contrary to UN guidelines? According to the Ghana News (2010), authorities undertaking demolition exercises must strive to strike a reasonable balance between putting a stop to the rampant practice of the construction of illegal structures on the one hand and causing unnecessary hardship to the victims, the majority of whom are women and who in many cases are the breadwinners in their households and in the lower income bracket of the society. How do we explain the demolition of houses in these countries where governments refused to pay compensation to property owners who had legal documents that supported their property?

Theoretical Points of Entry

First, I presume, on the basis of my own previous work (Akinola 1995, 1997, 2000, 2007, 2008) and that of several others (Appadurai 2001a,b; Appadurai and Holston 1999; Castells 1996; Olowu and Akinola 1995) that urbanization is producing new geographies of governmentality. Urban centres attract raw materials from the hinterland for the production of goods that make life enjoyable for urbanites. Under normal circumstances urban centres should reciprocate by sending back to the rural areas the good things of life in terms of

manufactured goods and social services under centrifugal force of dispersal and spread effects. Invariably, this has not been the case; rather, cities become centripetal force of attraction of every good things of life. The rural people then decide that: "if cities fail to give us these good things in return, then we follow our raw materials to cities." Thus, mass exodus of people, especially youth are moving into cities in an unprecedented manner. Specifically, we are witnessing new forms of politically organized power and exclusions within African polity. One expression of these new geographies can be seen in the relationship of "cities and citizenship" (Appadurai and Holston 1999), in which political leaders that are wealthy increasingly operate like mafia in a networked economy, increasingly independent of local mediation, and where poorer communities - and the poorer populations within them - seek new ways of claiming space and voice. They represent efforts to reconstitute citizenship in cities and such efforts could be referred to as "deepening democracy".

Second, I assume that as long as urban and rural areas are intricately intertwined, the people in the two areas as well as leadership and the led should regard themselves as an inseparable entity within development arena. Third I presume that the nation state system is undergoing a profound and transformative crisis. Fourth, I assume that "the peculiar and accidental situation, which providence" (Tocqueville 1966) places people, to a large extent, other things being equal, determines the fortunes of the people in that environment. It is on this note that I argue that African leaders have the responsibility of investing African resources in providing enabling environment for their citizens in both rural and urban areas. This is because society that pays attention to enhancing enabling environment for their citizens will produce self-reliant citizens that pursue development agenda by drawing on their productive potentials and capabilities.

In order to contextualize the line of analysis in this paper, Public Choice Theory (PCT) is adopted. One of the important puzzles about the governance of human societies turns upon the relationship of federalism to the widely held aspirations of people for 'democracy.' The term democracy implies that people govern. 'The government,' however, is plainly not the people. People vote and elect representatives who participate in the government. Voting is a very slender thread, hardly strong enough to let us presume that people, by electing representatives, govern. The ordinary use of language strongly implies that the government governs (V. Ostrom 1994:5). But reality on ground in Africa confirmed that government governs in a limited sense as demonstrated by calamitous failure of the state in responding to the socio-economic and political aspirations of the citizenry. The

people also govern in the light of the resilience of self-organizing arrangements that the people of Africa have devised over the years in addressing problems of daily life, the same areas where governments have consistently faltered (Wunsch and Olowu 1995; Sawyer 2005; Gellar 2005; Akinola, 2000, 2003a, 2004, 2005d, 2007a,f, 2008b, 2009a,b, 2010a,g,i, 2011a,b,c).

The failure of the liberal democratic paradigm and state-centered efforts in Africa requires a rethink on alternative ways of addressing African socioeconomic, technological, and political problems. Since it is difficult for individuals to change certain exogenous variables (physical environment in particular), individuals usually adopt and adapt institutions based on their life exigencies. This is where the IAD framework becomes relevant for sustainable development in Africa. Therefore, the specific variation used in this paper draws from the IAD framework. According to Sawyer (2005:3), institutional analysis helps us to better understand how individuals within communities, organizations and societies craft rules and organize the rule-ordered relationships in which they live their lives.

Relating institutions to Africa, the governance systems and rules that sustained them were inspired by European traditions, while the peoples in diverse language communities and ways of life in the continent were ignored (V. Ostrom 2006) and their governance structures were denigrated. This is where elite leadership in Africa could not respond appropriately. Since elites leadership have faltered, it is imperative to search for alternatives on how to appropriately address the needs and aspirations of the urban poor in Africa. Incidentally, citizens in urban areas have been able to respond by exploring pre-colonial governance heritage and to certain extent have been able to address their daily needs (Gellar 2005; Sawyer 2005; Akinola 2006, 2008b, 2009a, 2010a, 2011a). How did these peoples cope and how are they coping? What lessons can we learn from these people-centered adaptation strategies? How can we reconstruct and reconfigure urban public sphere to synergize the efforts of the people through their institutions and that of governments to resolve urban environmental degradation and poverty in Africa?

The argument of this paper is that since human societies are based on systems of cooperation, models that are designed to address problems in human societies cannot be effective except such models take cognizance of the underlining factors that underpin human cooperation. Unfortunately, models, policies and programmes that were applied in Africa relegated to the background essential elements of Africans' systems of cooperation such as collectivity, mutual trust and reciprocity that exist with the diverse peoples of Africa, who are mostly non-elite. With these alienating conditions entrenched in Africa, policies and programmes of African governments find it difficult to impact positively on the lives of

African citizens in urban areas. If we understand society as a system of human cooperation, the Hamilton ([1788] 1961:33) puzzle can be formulated as two questions: Are peoples of Africa capable of cooperating with one another to organize people-oriented urban governance that will produce accountable leaders of their choice? If the answer is affirmative, under what conditions can they cooperate to achieve such a goal?

Are there some roles citizens and the poor should play in the process of reconstructing urban public sphere and participating in public debates? What are these roles? How can urban public sphere be reconstructed to allow citizens at community level to be involved in decision making, rule-monitoring and enforcement of sanction on rule infraction? What role should citizens at community level play in urban policy making, for example? The argument is that until the urban public sphere in Africa is reshaped, reconstructed and reconfigured, policies will not be people-focused. Consequently, instead of policies being democratic; tyranny of the majority will continue to predominate; and urban poor in Africa, regardless of their endowment and entrepreneurial capability, will continue to suffer, while insecurity and poverty will be heightened.

The above facts suggest (if nothing is done to alter the trend) that African countries will continue to be bedevilled by demolition, evictions, human rights violations, ineffective and personalized political parties, economic growth devoid of benefits to the citizenry, increasing poverty, and deepening and extreme inequality. All these clearly point to the absence of democratic governance. The forty years experience since independence indicates that Africa lacks people-oriented urban governance system. The present system of governance is acceptable only to the political elite and a section of the “middle class” within African cities.

The fundamental questions, therefore, include the following: What kind of incentives favour trusted institutional arrangement among the people? How do people resolve their conflicts? How are the people surviving regarding basic needs like housing, health, education, transport, security, etc.? These are some of the questions that African scholars need to answer through empirical surveys in their various disciplines. Findings from such studies will help us come to terms with the resilience and robustness of African peoples as well as their vulnerability, exclusion and marginalization. This will produce a new body of knowledge that is necessary for decisions and policies that can positively touch the lives of urban poor in Africa.

It is important to sharp the contrasts between decentralization and polycentric governance or self-governance here. Decentralization does not mean the same thing as

polycentric governance though the two may embrace one another if the operators mean well. Evidence abound that decentralization across Africa (in Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria, Uganda, etc.) reflects a centralized local government within a decentralized system as these third tiers of government have no interactive links with community institutions. Invariably, the system is a failure as party patronage, embezzlement, improper use of council property and facilities, corruption and consequently poverty have been heightened (Ayee 1999b; 2006:137; Makara 2000; Devas and Grant 2003; Golooba-Mutebi 2004; Wunsch and Ottemoeller 2004; Olowu 2006; Akinola 2004; 2010g,i).

Decentralisation without polycentric governance strengthens corruption incentives as found in Ghana. That is why Ghanaian stable democratic political system does not enhance the welfare of the citizens. As a matter of fact, the 2009 Global Corruption Report has revealed that political will to fight corruption in Ghana⁶ had been the problem with governments, especially those affecting party faithfuls and financiers. As a result, Ghana ranked 152 out of 189 countries in the latest Human Development Report (2010), poorer even than Yemen, the Sudan, Haiti and even violence torn Pakistan and the Congo (Tande 2010). This confirms that free and fair elections and political stability may not contribute to welfare of citizens, hence, we should emphasise democratic system that can enable dividend of democracy to trickle down to the grassroots (Akinola 2010g,i). This is why this paper emphasizes polycentric governance that promotes inclusiveness.

Polycentric governance and decision making system enhance the capacity of citizens to talk, discuss, dialogue and engage in contestation in an assembly, whether at local or national level. It deals with multiple units of governments (multi-layers and multi-centers) and a way of working with one another among citizens with complementary arrangements for formulating, using, monitoring, judging, and enforcing rules (Elinor Ostrom 2005). If such institutions are granted autonomy, it will enhance effective collaboration, self-regulation and accountability (Wunsch and Olowu 1995:123).

Though there is a growing awareness of the need to strengthen community institutions which have existed and have facilitated self-reliant development at the local level, these institutions in Africa exist at grassroots without official connection with the state-based institutions. They operate on parallel line with governments, their agencies and international organizations (IOs) (see Akinola 2008b, 2009a,b, 2010a,g,i, 2011a). If these institutions are viable (though not perfect), the question then is how do we connect them to the formal government structure? The major concern of this paper, therefore, is to design

⁶ http://www.ghananewsagency.org/s_social/r_8415/ (Accessed 19/11/2009)

multi-layered and multi-centered institutional arrangement to ensure community self-governance in Africa. If this is achieved, the emergence of community self-governing institutions in Africa can be regarded as the new effort at creating an alternative model of African continent built from the grassroots.

In order to terminate primacy of cities and reduce urban chaos, there is the need to come to the understanding of the fact that society is a system of human cooperation that demands citizens (leaders and the people) working together as colleagues with equal standing within development arena. The type of governmentality that urbanization is producing in urban centres is polycentric in nature and orientation. Growth is basically achieved through economic activities in both rural and urban areas. As a matter of fact, rural area contributes more to economic growth considering the fact that African economic growth emanates mainly from extractive activities that are rural-based.

African countries that three to four decades ago were characterised as having more than 80 per cent of their populations being rural, were transformed so that today some 50 per cent live in the peri-urban slums with no rights of abode, tenure or any other form of security. Deregulation of all constraints on capital was the mantra of the day, justified as the precondition for encouraging foreign investment, which in turn would supposedly lead to 'development' (Habitat 2010). Landlessness, unemployment, increases in child, infant and maternal mortality rates, decline in life expectancy rates and impoverishment on an unprecedented scale came to be the lot of the majority of African citizens, while a minority accumulated and enriched themselves through their control of the state and alliance with international corporations (Manji 1998).

If rural people produce raw materials that cities need to develop, and cities managers fail to design cities to generate spread effects by sending back to the rural arenas good things of life in terms of manufactured goods and social services, then the rural people have the right to follow their raw materials to cities. In that circumstance, let no political leaders under 'mafia-ism' impose their self-designed laws and regulations that favour their class maltreat the urban poor. Invariably, poorer communities - and the poorer populations within them - should be given space and voice in urban governance under a well-designed polycentric arrangement and thereby deepening democracy. In the light of the above, the next section discusses resilience of self-governing institutions in urban Africa.

The Resilience of Community Self-Governing Institutions in African Cities

If men are to remain civilized or to become civilized, the art of association must develop and improved among them at the same speed as equality of conditions (Tocqueville 1988:517).

The local people in Africa have no confidence in those who run African governments, hence, they invest their sovereignty horizontally in one another through collective action and self-organizing and self-governing capabilities and thereby, to an extent, addressing daily challenges – education, health, community hall, postal service, security services, road repairs and other essential services. They achieved these through various forms of associations and community institutions (not donor civil society) by revisiting and reviving their old traditions. The people relied on institutional arrangements, shared norms and mutual agreements in a community of understanding that enabled them to sustain cooperation and advance the common interest of the group in which they belong. It is institutional structures that the people have developed over the years that availed individuals in these communities to make inputs to development in their locality by contributing towards projects (labour, finance and materials) and decision-making in socio-economic and political arenas (Akinola 2005d, 2007a:34, 2008b, 2011a:31).

This section draws from a recently published article by the author, titled, “Restructuring the Public Sphere for Democratic Governance and Development in Africa: The Polycentric Planning Approach.” In Abdalla Bujra (ed.). *Political Culture, Governance and the State in Africa*. Development Policy Management Forum (DPMF), Nairobi, Kenya, pp. 1-61. Using examples from Nigeria, South Africa and Senegal, this paper justifies the robustness and resilience of community self-organizing and self-governing institutions in African cities.

Recent indications in Africa, for instance, confirmed that civic democracy as a daily practice and form of life was rooted in the culture and social organisation of the people, which were based on mutual trust, reciprocity, and common understanding (2011a:31). The people organised themselves into several groups and associations to confront their present day challenges. The power of collectivity and joint efforts among the people are based on contractual relationships, building of trust and reciprocity in their day-to-day existence. The joint efforts, however, require certain rules and laws the people use in checking the individuals’ excesses and free-riding. Although these rules, in most of the communities, are not written down, they are already part of the people because their daily existence in all ramifications revolves around cooperation. In some other communities, especially as literacy

rate is increasing, associations are now writing their rules. For example, local people demonstrate great entrepreneurial capabilities in the way they handle local/community challenges in Nigeria and have achieved a reasonable level of success in the same areas where state-centred institutions have faltered.

In 1999, a survey conducted in Olaleye and Iponri communities, Lagos Mainland local government area (LGA) showed that the projects embarked upon by the institutions, no doubt, have increased the level of access of the people to infrastructure facilities. The two communities spent ₦615,000.00 on socio-economic projects between 1983 and 1997, while some ₦455,000.00 was contributed towards the same projects by Nigerian government, World Bank and other international donors. Thus, community development efforts constituted the prime mover (60.0%) of the community development (Akinola and Akutson 2001).

Another set of data on the contributions of community-based institutions in Ede, Osun State, Nigeria confirmed the resilience of urban-based community and people oriented institutions. Ede Descendant Union commenced community development operation since 1968 with market and educational facilities. As at 2003, the institution has spent ₦8.152 million (98.2%) and £688 (73.3%), while the local government contributed ₦0.146 million (1.8) and £250 (26.7%) on several socio-economic projects. Similarly, religious organizations are not left behind in urban development. Both the Christian and Islamic religions have provided and produced several community projects (covering the areas of health and education) in Saki, Oke-Ogun of Oyo State. The amount of money these religious institutions spent on social infrastructure was ₦2.1 billion (99.0%), while governments contributed ₦2.3 million (1.0%) towards the same projects. The critical question is, in spite of financial allocations received by Nigerian local governments from the federation account, where is the impact on the grassroots development?

Indications from South African corroborate the findings in Nigeria. For instance, the Zenzele clubs of the Eastern Cape of South Africa, which date from the late 1920s, were founded by educated African women who sought to improve the lives of African women by enhancing their subsistence farming and cooking skills and educating them about household cleanliness, basic child care and health care. The associations later spread to places like Uganda, Tanganyika and Southern Rhodesia where they focused on women and community development. Unlike associations for African women in British colonial Africa, Zenzele clubs in South Africa did not evolve into political organisations. In the white-run segregated and apartheid states that persisted through 1994, Zenzele women did not engage in direct

political action; rather, they sought to unite African women across class and ethnic lines and focused their efforts on community development (Higgs 2004; Akinola 2011a:31-32).

In Senegal, different occupational groups – traders, artisans, transporters, etc. form different types of associations that include: tribal associations, women’s associations, burial societies, neighbourhood society associations, youth associations, etc. It has been confirmed that urbanisation sparked a sharp rise in associational life in Dakar and other towns in Senegal. Several associations emphasised social and recreational activities, the provision of mutual assistance and credit to finance important life-cycle events, and a safety net to help the needy (Gellar 2005:94). The myriad of urban voluntary associations in Dakar and other major towns have contributed immensely to the socio-economic needs of their members and communities. The Catholic church sponsored a wide range of cultural, sports, and recreational associations while different branches of Muslim brotherhoods established various urban neighbourhood-based associations that brought the faithful together to provide mutual assistance and charity. Artisans formed their own groups as did migrants from different regions and ethnic groups and they engage in diverse social and economic activities (Gellar 2005:95).

These groups, since 1996 have come together to establish their own local development committees that engage in a wide range of economic activities, to evaluate their neighbourhood’s needs and to develop plans to improve the level of public goods and services. The rising participation of grassroots organisations in urban governance in Senegal has been accompanied by a heightened sense of citizenship on the part of their members (Gellar 2005:105). These developments in Senegal are slowly changing the nature of local politics by undermining patron-client relationships and party control of associational life and making local government officials increasingly accountable to their constituents rather than to their party (Gellar 2005:106). However, this remarkably successful institution received relatively little attention from government decision makers and donors largely because they were not part of national programmes and donor projects (Gellar 2005:98).

Among the elite in Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria, Senegal and South Africa, urban-based associations operate around professional, functional, and civic concerns led by individuals with relatively high educational levels. These associations generally operate as: (i) interest groups – trade unions, professional associations, business associations, students associations, etc. – striving to advance the corporate interests of their members; (ii) advocacy groups seeking to promote human, civic and women rights, good government and democracy; and (iii) civic minded economic, social, and cultural associations (i.e. development NGOs) that

are involved in projects to address the needs of the poor, improve their city or region. These groups (NGOs) exist to provide services or activities in sectors from which the state has retreated of its own accord, such as health, development and other beneficial activities (Hodgkin 1957; Wallerstein 1964; Kew 2004:128; Gellar 2005:100-102).

Also important to buttress the resilience of SGIs are innovative and inspiring examples of locally-driven water and sanitation initiatives in Ghana's urban areas. According to Osumanu, et. al. (2010:1) People's Dialogue Ghana (PDG) in Ghana's urban areas is a community-based NGO that works in partnership with the Ghana Homeless People's Federation to find permanent solutions to urban poverty through the improvement of human settlements and shelter conditions. Since its formation in 2003, PDG has been working in slums and informal settlements in Accra, Tema, Kumasi, Takoradi, Afram Plains, etc.

PDG emerged in the process of stalling forced eviction organized by the local authority in 2002. The residents of Old Fadama formed a Federation (now known as Ghana Federation of the Urban Poor, GHAFUP), supported by People's Dialogue Ghana (PDG), to engage and negotiate with local authorities and prevented the evictions. In 2005, PDG and GHAFUP established a formal engagement between Federation members and the government/local authorities, where an agreement was reached to stall the eviction, thereby marking the beginning of a shift from forced eviction to dialogue, engagement and partnerships.

Consequently, there emerged a government plan to relocate residents of Old Fadama under a planned Adjin Kotoku New Town Development Project that involved Ministries of Local Government, Rural Development and Environment, Water Resources, and Works and Housing. PDG and GHAFUP are members of the relocation project's Implementation Task Force and have been commissioned to collect socio-economic and physical base data of both the Old Fadama area in Accra (one of the communities to be relocated) and of Adjin Kotoku. With support from Shack/Slum Dwellers International (SDI)⁷, a settlement profile was completed (Osumanu, et. al. 2010:12-13).

Additionally, PDG negotiates with financial institutions on behalf of the Federation to acquire loans at concessionary rates for housing infrastructure development and economic empowerment. Globally, Federation groups and support organisations have a vision of an

⁷ PDG is affiliated to Slum Dwellers International (SDI), a loose network of people's organisations from many countries that seek to organise and unite the urban poor to influence the way governments, international NGOs and multinationals discharge their obligations to the poor.

alternative world. This vision is backed up by practice, customs and approach. The tools used are simple enumerations, savings groups and community meetings. These simple tools have helped in developing a new culture of care and nurturing. For example, savings programmes build a strong culture of accountability and openness. And when enumerations are carried out this information is shared with the community for analysis. By collecting savings on a regular basis Federation members move from structure-to-structure collecting money, talking to residents, gathering information, identifying problems and seeing how as a community they can begin to solve problems.

PGD builds on and fosters community-led initiatives to meet the basic housing needs of the urban poor. So far, the approach has had significant impact not only in terms of generating household and community demand for housing and related facilities but also in terms of fostering individual behaviour which facilitates access to services and promotes the development of a self-sustaining demand and supply mechanism. This remarkable achievement in Old Fadama is an inspiration to other settlements which face similar challenges in slums and informal settlements. By December 2009, the Federation had expanded and established active groups and functional offices in Ghana's five major urban centres, Accra, Kumasi, Tamale, Takoradi and Tema. In terms of scale, the Ghana Federation currently has over 8,500 family members belonging to about 95 savings groups and covering seven out of the ten administrative regions of Ghana. The Federation now has national visibility and is recognised by urban state and non-state actors. Taking lessons from these experiences, the Federation in the Abotoase community in the Volta Region of Ghana has also initiated a project to develop a small town water system to benefit over 6,000 people (Osumanu, et. al. 2010:23).

Similarly, the solution the problem of lack of potable water in Bodija market in Ibadan, the largest city in West Africa, was achieved through the intervention of Bodija Market Area Community Development Association (BMACDA) in the 1990s. Solutions to the problem was internally developed and not externally driven by 'non-involved' technocrats. The BMACDA in collaboration with UNICEF and Sustainable Ibadan Project Trust Fund (SIPTF) partnered with four public stakeholders: (a) The Ibadan North Local Government (where the market is located), (b) Oyo State Ministries of Commerce and Agriculture, (c) Oyo State Environmental Protection Agency and (d) The Ibadan Waste Management Authority. The seven private stakeholders are: (1) Bodija Market Food Sellers Association, (2) Cattle Sellers Association, (3) Plank Sellers Association, (4) Private Entrepreneurs, (5) Wema Bank

Plc., (6) Firms of Lawyers and Engineers located in the area, and (7) Landlords/Tenants Association in the neighbourhood.

The Bodija Association initiated the water project and worked with UNICEF and SIPTF from planning, financing, execution to management/monitoring stages, while the local government officials supervised the project. The SIPTF partly assisted the association financially in 1997 and the project was successfully completed, maintained and managed by the market association (Ogbuozobe 2010). This confirms that local participation is a key element in the development process.

The resilience of SGIs across Africa and the performance of PGD and BMACDA in Ghana and Nigeria respectively on provision of social services only confirm principles and practices across the globe. For example, an alliance formed by three civic organizations in Mumbai⁸, India to address poverty – the NGO SPARC⁹, the National Slum Dwellers Federation¹⁰ and Mahila Milan¹¹. The key features of their work which include: putting the knowledge and capacity of the poor and the savings groups that they form at the core of all their work (with NGOs in a supporting role); keeping politically neutral and negotiating with whoever is in power; driving change through setting precedents (for example, a community-designed and managed toilet, a house design developed collectively by the urban poor that they can build far cheaper than public or private agencies) and using these to negotiate support and changed policies (a strategy that develops new “legal” solutions on the poor’s own terms). Invariably, they are, or can be, instruments of deep democracy, rooted in local context and thus seeking to redefine what governance and governability mean (Appadurai 2001:3).

These examples provide a basis for better understanding of how to identify and build upon local initiatives that are likely to improve water and sanitation services. Local people have been able to consider various possible alternatives to many current coping and management strategies, especially revitalizing public dialogue that has been missing for many years. Meetings and community gatherings are important opportunities for people to

⁸ In Mumbai about 40 per cent of the population (about 6 million persons) live in slums or other degraded forms of housing (Appadurai 2001:24).

⁹ The Society for the Promotion of Area Resource Centres, or SPARC, is an NGO formed by social work professionals in 1984 to work with problems of urban poverty in Mumbai.

¹⁰ NSDF, the National Slum Dwellers Federation, is a powerful grassroots organization established in 1974 and is a CBO, or community-based organization, that also has its historical base in Mumbai.

¹¹ Mahila Milan is an organization of poor women, set up in 1986, with its base in Mumbai and a network throughout India, focused on women’s issues in relation to urban poverty and concerned especially with local and self-organized savings schemes among the very poor.

voice their opinions in public. This is instructive for the formation of self-governing community assembly in African urban cities (Akinola 2010a,I, 2011a).

However, there are no concerted efforts on the part of African governments to rally round these community-based institutions for synergy and co-production on urban amenities and development. The pertinent question is: What hinders Ghanaian government from learning from the example of People's Dialogue Ghana within its domain in Accra in 2005 before adopting barbaric approach in demolishing homes in December 2010?

Government's apathy notwithstanding, there is evidence that civil society - i.e. occupational, community-based, and religious organizations - exists at localities all over Africa, and in some circumstances can be an important participant in service delivery and in enforcing accountability (Olowu, Ayo and Akande, 1991; Bratton 1989, 1990, 1994; Bratton and van de Walle 1997; Olowu and Erero, 1997; Adedeji, 1997; Coulibally, 1999; Akinola, 2000, 2003b, 2004, 2005d, 2007a, 2008b). This self-governing arrangement empowers citizens, protects individual choice and allows for polycentric institutional arrangement that permits citizens to join with one another to take collective action (Wunsch and Olowu 1995:274). These patterns of self-organising and self-governing capabilities of the local people in resolving their daily challenges are described as polycentricity.

Evidence abound that these people-centred institutions have also ventured into security of life and property as the fear of crime and feelings of insecurity had led to people losing confidence in official policing. For example, the remarkable performances of community-based security institutions (CBSIs) in crime bursting in Nigeria lend credence to the effectiveness of institutions designed and managed by the people themselves and these confirmed them as alternatives and/or complementary structures for the maintenance of security of life and property (Akinola 2009a). As in Nigeria, local people in South Africa have started creating their own parallel structures of law enforcement to enforce safety and security and the result is a growth in the phenomenon of vigilante groups. For instance, security volunteers in SOWETO (South West Township), Johannesburg, South Africa handed over an average of 30 suspects to the Police every month (Prime Time News, (e-news), 18 February 2007; Akinola 2011a:34).

In spite of discouraging picture with respect to African development, further indications from other African countries such as Ghana, Chad and Uganda confirm the role of community-based organisations as units of de facto local government (Olowu and Wunsch 2004:11). Africa has its glorious picture of real democratic life necessary for development as depicted by associational life of diverse peoples in the continent, though

may not be accepted by the Western tradition. The kinds of civic spirit in African peoples in terms of willingness to make sacrifices are worth commending. In a nutshell, there is a strong sense of community-oriented, people-centered and true democracies among diverse peoples of Africa outside the domain of the state.

From the above analyses, it is clear that mass mobilisation strategy provides answers to most local development questions which the state has been dodging over the years. Rather than wait for the public authorities, the communities in these countries through self-organising and self-governing capabilities have planned and executed several public goods and services that directly touched the lives of their people. It is only at this level of common pool resources that some achievements have been realized. This is the doctrine of polycentricity which provides alternative strategies to address problems of daily existence at the grassroots level in the face of dismal performance of the modern state institutions.

The existence and operation of these self-governing and community-based institutions, however, does not replace the role of government; rather to redefine it. The most important role of government, in a polycentric order is to help local people resolve their conflicts of interest in a way that remains consistent with societal standards of fairness. In other words, government should not be involved in too many things; rather it should play the role of facilitator to ensure fairness and justice.

The lesson we can learn from these institutions is how they are able to mobilize and use resources judiciously for the provision of social services. At the same time, the tenets of democracy exhibited by these self-governing institutions as well as their contributions to socio-economic development have made them highly relevant to urban governance. The concern is that if these institutions are so accountable to their members, we should begin to conceptualize how they can be used to re-constitute socio-economic and political order from the bottom-up and to serve as alternatives and/or complementarities to the modern state institutions. In order to reconstruct the public sphere and democratise social relations in Africa, an important task that needs to be accomplished is to build on the existing self-governing structures in the continent (Akinola 2011a:34-36).

Polycentric Governance and a New Urban Governmentality

The present exogenous urban governance system that is elite driven as being practiced in developed democracies is not applicable to African context simply because the majority of Africans operate in informal sector of economy, where a centralized system of governance unable to capture. Therefore, the adoption of polycentric systems to governance

will produce a new urban governmentality in three ways: (1) Polycentric system otherwise called local self-governance units contribute to the success of democratic life both directly and indirectly. Indirectly, they provide a necessary training in the discipline of democratic association at the local level for urban citizens and help to recruit and train local and future national leaders. Directly, effective polycentric and self-governments can act as a check, under certain circumstance, on the excesses of the central government as well as provide greater opportunities for accountable government. (2) Self-governing organizations mobilize substantial efforts and resources from the local people to complement the efforts of the central government. (3) The formation of Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) also makes it easy to mobilize at local level for information dissemination or education and developmental activities.

The argument is that if African countries want to emulate the successes of advanced industrial society, then she needs to learn how to make efficient use of her physical, human, and institutional resources. But the processes of learning need not be unidirectional. Experiences of community-based institutions in Africa on rule-ruler-ruled relationship in meeting common challenges in the delivery of common goods and social services, conflict resolution mechanism and protection of lives and properties need to be taken into consideration in policy formulation. We need to understand the ways in which local communities manage those resources that are most important to their own survival or prosperity.

The results of all the case studies on the impacts of community-based institutions (CBIs) show that the level of participation by community members in their institutions was higher than that of local governments. Many of the institutions write, approve and adopt constitutions that guide their activities. Unlike the local governments whose main laws and edicts are imposed on them more often by the Federal and Sub-national Governments, CBIs organize and direct their own affairs in response to the needs of the communities. Because the level of participation was high, more attention was paid to the enforcement of accountability than the local governments. However, within the framework of the modern state, these highly vibrant organs are largely apolitical, and in some cases antipolitical. Both of these patterns are in large measure a reaction to years of antidemocratic environments in most African states (Davidson 1992; Mamdani 1996).

Analysis and discussions in this section show that in spite of the shortcoming of the state-centered institutions in Africa, Africans in various cultural and ecological conditions have attempted to address problems of daily existence through self-governing and self-

organizing capabilities. This confirms that the people also govern and not to presume it is only government that governs. If the people govern, then government governs in a limited sense. In this respect, according to Olowu and Wunsch (2004:78), much might be made of community-level government and social capital, both to enhance “voice” and to improve local governance. It then becomes necessary for us to evolve and design appropriate institutional framework that will streamline the governing techniques of both the government and the people in a polycentric manner.

Analysis and modeling appropriate to the vision via new institutional arrangements for implementation are also very crucial for resolving the crisis of demolition and evictions in African cities. The new institutional mechanism will enable African state to reposition urban managers to deliver inclusive housing policies and strategies as well as public services like healthcare, education, water supply, electricity, roads and poverty reduction incentives on the one hand and evolve appropriate rural industrialization and employment generation programmes that can stem the tide of rural-urban migration on the other hand. The paper considers imperative the application of pragmatic and problem-solving home-grown models to identified challenges as well as political economic factors that significantly determine citizens’ welfare in African cities. Since political factor determines the operation of other sectors of economy, the adoption of African Public Sphere Restructuring Model (APSRM) is imperative (see for details, Akinola 2010a, 2011a).

Polycentric governance and poverty reduction strategy

Polycentric governance and poverty reduction strategy is a system of human cooperation. Since society is a system of human cooperation, people in any society should collectively relate to and deal with their exogenous variables in order to subdue poverty. Exogenous variables are those conditions that affect human livelihoods and which humans have to work upon through appropriate planning and institutional arrangements to better their conditions of existence. However, there are some fundamental imperatives of collective action within development arena. These are collegiality, mutual trust, reciprocity and shared understanding. It is the realization of these imperatives through constitutional reforms, effective planning and institutional arrangements that can enable the people and their leaders to work together to achieve meaningful progress (Akinola 2010a, 2011a).

Cooperation requires deliberation. That is why deliberative democracy is considered more appropriate for Africa (Akinola 2011a). For example, one of the proud inheritances of South Africa’s democracy is public dialogue in the form of community forums, negotiations,

and *imbizo*¹². Community forums have been part of social movements in the fight against both apartheid and post-apartheid inequalities. Negotiations proudly characterized the transition to democracy which is based on principles of nondiscrimination (Hartslief 2005:1). The equivalent of *imbizo* among the Yoruba of Western Nigeria is *igbimo ilu* (town court of legislators), *opuwari* among the Ijaw in Bayelsa State and *mbogho* among the Efik and Ibibio of Cross River and Akwa Ibom States of Nigeria. It is high time Africans looked back in retrospect to learn from their roots by harnessing certain self-governing principles that are inherent in their cultural/traditional heritage to address urban challenges.

If we agree that institutions matter in terms of their influence on cooperation, then self-organizing and self-governing arrangements that the peoples of Africa have adopted in cooperating mutually in responding to their common problems are imperatives as the first condition to be met for the attainment of good urban governance and viable democracies. Recent indications support the fact that the peoples of Africa through self-organizing and self-governing arrangements have been responding appropriately to the needs and aspirations of the citizenry. By exploring pre-colonial governance heritage and practices elsewhere, the people have been able to respond to social challenges that the state has effectively dodged over the years. Considering the good performance of the local people through self-governing institutions in Ghana, Nigeria, Senegal, South Africa, etc, African peoples are capable of cooperating with one another to organize people-oriented urban governance.

It is this type of self-governing and self-organising arrangement that can be integrated into the formal system of government in African urban areas. This, invariably, would lead to effective cooperation and deliberation between and among public officials and citizens at community/ward level, thereby eliminating gaps between the two groups. The application of Polycentric Governance and Poverty Reduction Strategy (PGPRS) in Africa would enable a reduction of vulnerability by resolving urban environmental, socio-economic and cultural challenges in the continent. Using PGPRS, an African Polycentric Urban Governance Model (APUGM) is designed.

¹² *Imbizo* is a word from the Zulu language in South Africa. It means a “gathering” for the purpose of discussing important matters within a group or community. Its ultimate purpose is to ensure participation of members in the process of conceptualising, making and executing decisions. The *imbizo*, in its traditional form, has constituted an important aspect of the indigenous African political system for many centuries, especially in Southern Africa (Hartslief, 2005:1).

An African Polycentric Urban Governance Model (APUGM)

In order to enable urban managers in Africa effectively deliver urban services and respond to yearnings and aspirations of urban citizens, this paper designs an African Polycentric Urban Governance Model (APUGM). The APUGM is diagrammatized in Fig. 1. The first part of the model (Nos. 1-10) displays the failure of centralised, monocentric and monocratic systems of governance occasioned by structurally-defective institutional arrangement that has resulted into exclusion and consequent dualistic economy and policy. The problem of centralised system of governance is that citizens have no input into decision, planning, execution, monitoring, evaluation and assessment of public goods and services, especially from conception to implementation. What usually happens is that decisions are taken at the seat of power “far away” from citizens. As a result, mistakes and errors in planning and decisions are not easily amenable when they are discovered. Even in emergency cases, local officers still require approval from high-level bosses who are secluded from the citizens; thus, subjecting destiny of citizens to whims and caprices of rigid bureaucratic decisions. Invariably, centrally motivated strategy leads to increasing socio-economic and techno-political dependency, heightened mass poverty and choking of local initiatives.

Dualistic economy and policy produce two environments within African cities – Government Reservation Area (GRA) for the elite and Poor Reservation Area (PRA) for the non-elite. While all the good things of life are available within the GRA with little population and high percentage of resources, the PRA is highly populated with small resources and lacks basic services. The later is described as slums, urban ghetto, shacks and informal settlements. What is common in the slums is scarcity of good things of life with attendant struggle and aggression. The only plan the elite have for the slum dwellers is demolition and evictions as good riddance, which is a violation of human rights and injustice. With evictions, things fall apart for the slum dwellers in socio-economic terms. As a result, poverty is deepening and human misery is heightened, thus generating aggression and violence on urban streets. The use of police in dispersing protesters and rioters further complicates matters as citizens are killed and property destroyed; thus leading to the second level of aggression; this time, against the state. This aggression usually takes the forms of urban violence, crisis and vandalism – failed urban governance. This failure requires a rethinking and a paradigm shift on urban governance to an inclusive institutional framework that would be appropriate for cities dwellers – elite and non-elite – in Africa.

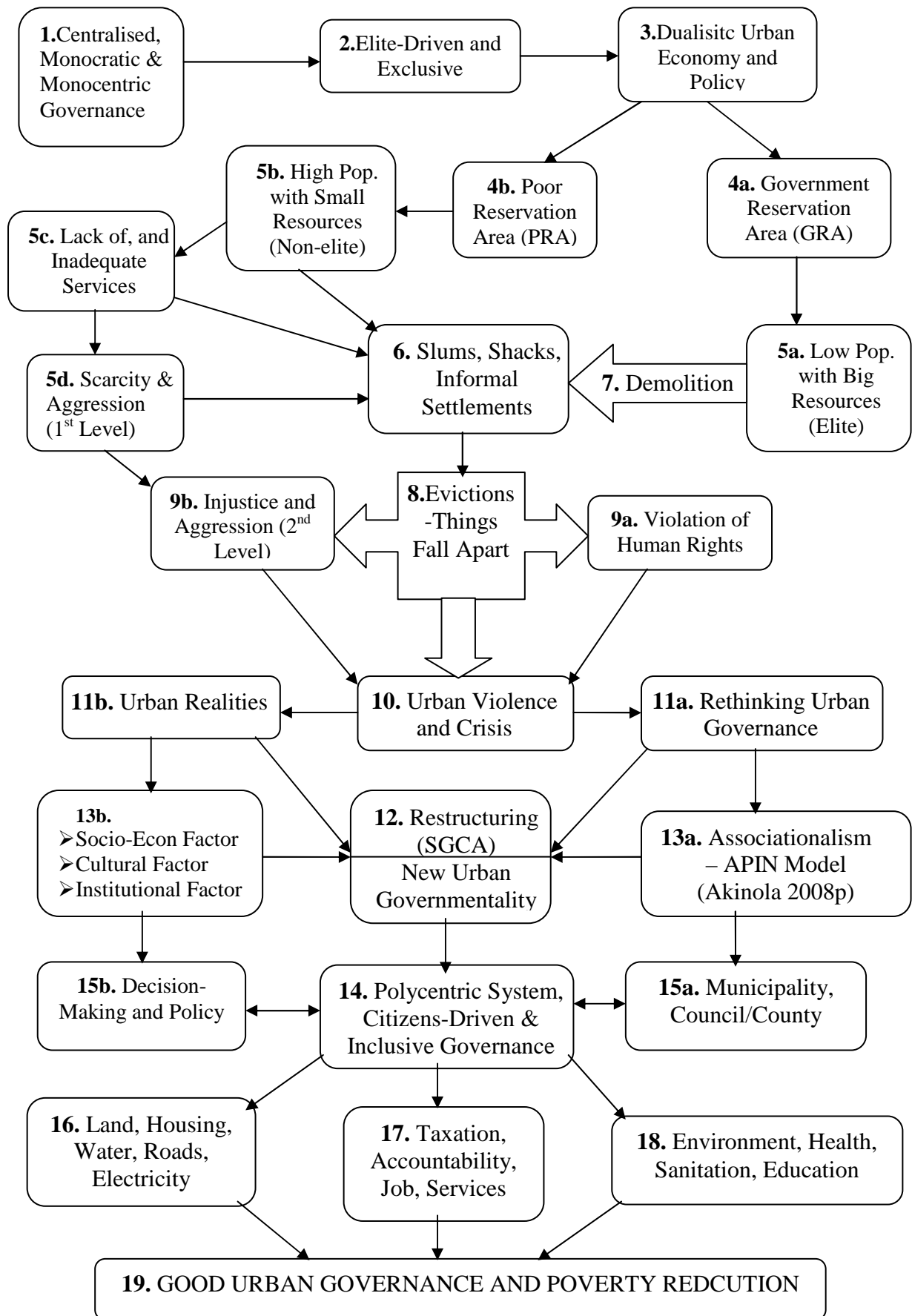


Fig. 1: An African Polycentric Urban Governance Model (APUGM)

The second part of the model (Nos. 11-19) displays the way forward, especially on the role of African scholars in rethinking urban governance by charting possible courses of actions on how urban managers can work with citizens in synergy. Rethinking urban governance requires the imperatives of urban realities to be factored into a new urban governmentality. Urban realities should be viewed and analysed via exogenous variables (socio-economic and institutional factors). The paradigm shift in governance demands a new institutional arrangement through restructuring whereby the efforts of the stakeholders in the public terrains – politicians, bureaucrats, technocrats, NGOs, youth, unemployed persons, self-governing institutions, etc. – are synergized. Since political factor determines the operation of other sectors of the economy, restructuring the public sphere becomes central to resolving urban governance and development crisis (Akinola 2011a).

At the heart of restructuring the public sphere is the operation of Self-Governing Community Assembly (SGCA). The stakeholders/participants would operate using rules that are crafted by members at the SGCA. Rule crafting takes place at three levels – constitutional, collective choice and operational. At the constitutional level lies the system that determines how rules are made and can be modified. At the heart of effective public service delivery is the imperativeness of constitutional reform which can be accomplished through pragmatic experience. The adoption of polycentric strategy could avail the citizens the opportunities to dialogue in community assembly and jointly take decisions on public service delivery. At the collective choice level, rules that define and constrain the actions of individuals and citizens in public service delivery matters have to be established. At the operational level, concrete actions have to be undertaken by those individuals most directly affected, especially community members (see Akinola 2010a, 2011a).

Self-Governing Community Assembly (SGCA), Civic Enlightenment and Citizens' Responsibilities/Tasks

To hearken to the words of Vincent Ostrom, constructing democracies through the science of citizenship and civic enlightenment within and outside schools (formal and informal) requires cooperation and deliberation among leaders and citizens at the SGCA. The SGCA should be patterned after *imbizo*, *igbimo ilu*, *opuwari* and *mbogho* but modified to include representatives of governments with their agencies, higher institutions, community institutions, occupational groups, women groups, youth, etc.). Since SGCA is a multi-tasks assembly, one of its operations will have to do with education and enlightenment of citizens so that public officials and the people operate within shared communities of understanding.

This is because people are the human resource for the supply of physical labour, technical and professional skills which are germane to effective and efficient planning and implementation of development policies, programmes and public services. Some of the critical questions that citizens need to address at the SGCA include:

1. What should governments do in terms of service delivery and how should they do it?
2. What can people do alone without government intervention?
3. What can people do in tandem with government?
4. How can people handle these issues in numbers 1 to 3?
5. What should be the role of local people in shaping electoral system before, during and after elections to ensure the delivery of dividend of democracy?

Both leaders and citizens need new orientations, which require some training at the level of SGCA. The leaders need new orientation in community governance and management of community affairs. Leaders should come down to the level of citizens (as proposed in AERD – Akinola 2008p:192-193; 2010g), while citizens need to be prepared for regular dialogues with their leaders. Community-led initiatives that draw on the creativity and capacity of local people to take control of their change processes must be integrated into poverty intervention programmes (Osumanu, et. al. 2010:32). Development partners and stakeholders can support community led initiatives by allowing the poor to take the driving seat and by providing them with adequate resources to enable them to plan and to implement their own projects. Conscious effort must be made to recognize and respect local dynamics in addressing the development challenges which slum dwellers face. It is important to mobilize residents to engage government and city authorities in exploring alternatives for resolving an eviction notice as was done in Ghana in the late nineties and 2005, for examples.

It is important at this juncture to point out that many citizens of Africa are ignorant of the fact that they have the civil rights to attend their local government meetings and that they have the right to ask the management of a local government questions about its revenue, expenditure, taxation and accountability. In the words of Aluko (2006:121), Citizens, even though they are aware of the corruption in their local government, prefer to “leave it to God” to judge the erring politicians. Invariably, citizens have concluded that corruption is an institutionalized way of life for public officers. This parochially institutionalized mentality should change. Again, this forms part of the second condition that needs to be met before the Africa people can cross the hurdles in their passage to mutually

productive ways of life, democratic society and development. The emerging new institutional arrangement would produce a new urban governmentality that is polycentric, citizens driven and inclusive. This would reflect new ways of operations by municipality, council/county in decision making and policy formulation.

When citizens are able to realize that they can and should take full responsibilities in shaping and re-shaping socio-economic and techno-political configurations to suit their daily aspirations and yearnings through active and constructive interjections, then shared communities of understanding would be established. This would provide fertile ground for the adoption of successful practices elsewhere. Communication both in words and deeds between leaders and citizens should not be abstract; they should be in tangible forms – goods and services in forms of access to land, affordable housing due to low cost of building materials, job opportunities, good roads, health, education, etc. At the end of the day, African countries would experience good urban governance and poverty reduction.

Conclusion

The paper concludes that centralised, monocentric and monocratic systems of governance occasioned by structurally-defective institutional arrangement in Africa has resulted into exclusion and consequent dualistic economy and policy that favours the few ruling elite, while the majority of African citizens living in slums and informal settlements face danger of evictions and demolition as well as threat of lives in attempts to resist being dispossessed of their property. In order to protect the rights, life and property of citizens, especially the poor in African urban areas, a polycentric arrangement that is inclusive in decision making is inevitable. For urban governance to benefit urban residents, it has to proceed from the people and be guided by them in decisions on all urban matters, including planning and modification of plans. Self-organizing and self-governing arrangements that urban poor and/or city residents in Africa have adopted in cooperating mutually in responding to their common problems are imperatives for the attainment of good governance, viable democracies and sustainable development in Africa. This is because effective polycentric arrangements and self-governments can act as a check, under certain circumstance, on the excesses of the central government as well as provide greater opportunities for accountable government. Self-governing arrangements mobilize substantial efforts and resources from the local people to complement the efforts of the central government.

Using Polycentric Governance and Poverty Reduction Strategy, this paper designs an African Polycentric Urban Governance Model (APUGM) capable of mainstreaming citizens-centred institutions in urban areas into socio-economic and techno-political decision making so that citizens (including the urban poor) can participate effectively in decisions that concern their lives. The new institutional mechanism would enable the people to have a robust political dialogue at federal/central, state/provincial and local levels in order to reposition urban councils to effectively manage urban environment and deliver public services to the people. The emerging new institutional arrangement would, therefore, produce a new urban governmentality that is polycentric, citizens driven and inclusive; thus, entrenching good urban governance, citizens-centred planning and development in Africa.

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