

Think Local, Act local

Promoting sustainable planning in Choma, a typical local district in Zambia

Catelijne Elissen

Introduction

For many cities in the developing world, urban planning has been an expression of a colonial system which has often created a fragmented, inefficient city. After independence, the structural adjustment policies imposed on developing countries have emphasized the social and spatial division in cities. With measures such as opening up to foreign markets, privatisation of businesses and sale of public properties, the income of the state has significantly reduced. Amongst other, economic, social and cultural trends as well as donor dependency have a major influence on the more recent development of cities in Sub-Saharan countries. The weak economy, high unemployment rate, poverty, low life expectancy and the high prevalence of HIV/AIDS put much pressure on the need for forward planning.

And still today, urban planning practice largely relies on old means, subtly mixed with the values from a traditional chiefdom society and strengthened by a highly centralised and cumbersome government. This form of planning does not allow the potential of strategic, participatory and integral planning that are necessary ingredients for sustainable planning. The national government and local authorities are not able to provide adequate fundamentals to its citizens in terms of housing and basic services and are furthermore challenged by rapid urban growth. The planning institutions are as a result not ahead of urban development, essential for a successful sustainable future.

Choma

This paper will show the case of Choma District, a medium sized city with a total population of circa 250.000, covering 7300km² of which only 45 km² is the central urban area and accommodates 35% of the population while 65% is spread out over the 446 villages and 3 sub centres in the district. Choma is exemplary for the difficulties faced by local authorities in developing countries to carry out their responsibilities. The examples given in this paper are based on practical experiences while working at Choma Municipal Council, promoting participatory, transparent and strategic procedures. It will consist of an analysis of existing planning instruments and the implementation of new, sustainable methods such as the Integrated Development Plan (IDP).

Common problems that are faced by the government from a planning point of view are not restricted to the following but cover the most serious issues which all pose serious challenges to sustainable urban development in the country.

Challenges for planning in the developing world

- TRADITIONAL VS INTEGRAL :
 - o All public institutions have inherited a colonial planning system and accordingly their governance. The current planning tools are based on both colonial and traditional chief culture. Integral planning is still very new and the available knowledge at councils and in education is limited. Communication between different governmental departments is lacking which does not provide a good example to citizens.
- CENTRAL VS LOCAL
 - o National government still has a significant role in local government, even if these local institutions are planning authorities and are responsible for service

delivery to the citizens. Although a decentralisation process has been announced, central government still has to approve all land allocations, which extend the duration of procedures.

- URBAN VS RURAL
 - o The traditional villages can not compete with the attraction and shift to the urban township. The economic opportunities in the township appeal to young people. This causes a growth of illegal, unplanned settlements and a higher percentage of people living in peri-urban settlements.
 - o Due to the high pressure on state land as an income generator for the council the formally available land is mainly allocated to high income groups and is disadvantageous to lower incomes groups.
 - o The economy in Choma district is largely dependent on agriculture both in urban and rural area. Poor infrastructure and long distances make it hard to sell rural products.
- AWARENESS VS BEHAVIOUR
 - o HIV/AIDS is one of the nation's greatest health challenges, with 16% prevalence among the adult population. Although medicines are generally available in urban areas there remains a stigma on testing.
 - o The unsustainable use of natural resources such as wood for charcoal, is an exploitation of environmental resources
- EXPECTATIONS VS PAST
 - o Difficulties arise when adapting from a traditional (village) lifestyle to new expectations of modern western life; including but not limited to ICT, globalisation, transport and unequal distribution of income. Although Zambia can be considered as an internally stable nation, despite its many tribes, it is bearing a troubled past in politics and elections are coming up in 2011.

What causes these challenges?

Many different causes contribute to the above mentioned challenges; alas many are outside the planning spheres of influence. However, an understanding of some fundamentals is necessary for discussing the problems and making suggestions for change.

- A severe lack of human and financial resources and skills in local government;
- Presence of strong traditions that make changes go very slowly, power remains within certain networks, attitudes of negligence and ignorance, continuation of certain stigmas and preservation of corruption;
- A weak economy, that is dependent on commodities such as copper and agriculture. Despite progress made on the macro economic level, economic growth remains below the necessary levels to reduce poverty. In addition, the presence of donors with different interest complicates the national economy;
- A negative image of a struggling government system on all levels with a negative image to residents;
- Impact of globalisation causing amongst other consequences urban migration and increasing inequalities.

What can urban planning do for Choma?

The urban development opportunities for Choma can be found in the position of the town on the (inter)national road and railway corridor between Lusaka and Livingstone, the fact of being the city with many provincial government offices in the Southern Province, a large agricultural centre with possibilities for processing food and many people passing through which contribute to creation of employment and trade.

These opportunities have to be pursued by the responsible planning authorities. Urban planning is a central instrument of governance and needs to take into account all the challenges and opportunities when adopted for future development.

Analysis

What instruments are available to planners?

According to the Compact Oxford English Dictionary an Instrument (– noun) is:

1. a tool or implement, especially for precision work
2. a measuring device, especially in a vehicle or aircraft
3. a device for producing musical sounds
4. a means of pursuing an aim
5. a person who is made use of
6. a formal or legal document

Is a town planning instrument: *A legal, tool for pursuing an aim?*

In New South Wales, Australia they describe it as following: “*the planning and development assessment system is the means by which we manage our environment and use of resources*”. They hereby make difference between legislation and planning instruments. The latter they define as: “*State planning policies and local plans are legal documents that regulate land use and development.*”

This is also true for Zambia; the legislation is available from the state government as well as from national, regional and local policies and plans. In the analysis of planning instruments this distinction is used for describing both the present situation and near future.

National (urban) planning policy and legal context

Zambia is one of the most urbanised countries in Africa; the current country’s current urban areas provide a home for almost 50% of the country’s population. Lusaka is the country’s best known and most urbanised city, however many other cities in Zambia are also experiencing rapid urban growth. In the larger cities many people live in informal settlements and peri-urban areas that have inappropriate housing and lack basic services, according to the UN Habitat review of Zambia. The urban environment is threatened with over-exploitation of resources due to poverty. Waste collection and management is inadequate. According to documents from UN, the country has made good progress on stabilising the economy at the macro-economic level, although at the same time, the country’s social and economic indicators reveal that much work remains to alleviate poverty. 68% of Zambians live below the national poverty line, and 46% of these are classified as extremely poor. This categorises Zambia among the world poorest nations with a Human Development Index of 48,1% which left Zambia ranking 164th out of the 182 countries according to comprehensive statistics published by the Worldbank.

Current legislation, legal provisions

The Ministry of Local Government and Housing (MLGH) operates under several legal provisions, the main act is the Local Government Act Cap 281 comprising regulations about responsibilities and duties of a local Council. The most important Acts that provide a framework for urban planning are:

1. Town and Country Planning Act Cap 283; *enacted in 1962, before independence in 1964. Provides a framework for planning, grant of planning permission and control of development in the main cities and towns in the country.*
2. Housing (Statutory) Improvement Areas Act Cap 194; *enacted in 1975. This act provides for the control and improvement of housing in Statutory Housing Areas, better known as legalizing of informal settlements.*

The year of issue of the legislation informs us that these documents are based on outdated systems when planning instruments had strict distinction between uses. Modern-day well

known planning terminology such as integrated plans, sustainable development, and participatory approach are not mentioned in these documents.

The two Acts together, will be replaced by the new Regional and Urban Planning Bill. This Bill is drafted with help from foreign NGOs. It consists of a modern day planning framework on different levels and will also enhance the decentralisation policy that Zambia has adopted. An important part of the new Bill is the commission of Integrated Development Plans (IDP) to District, Municipal and City Councils, as they will become the primary planning authorities for regional and urban planning including both urban (state land) and rural (traditional land). The IDP will become the main planning tool at the local level but Councils will be required to submit the IDP for approval to the MLGH. Overall, the Bill should promote and support development in Zambia including areas that previously have not benefited from planned development.

It is expected in the UN report that this new Bill will *“bring about a transition from the old fashioned master planning which is archaic and rigid, to integrated development planning which takes into account all contemporary planning issues through adequate participation of stakeholders in the planning process”*. The major drawback of this positive development is the vagueness of when it will be enacted and councils are waiting for a go ahead.

Apart from the MLGH the Ministry of Lands has an essential role in the planning laws due to its supervision over (state) land. The Lands Act of 1995 is considered very narrow and contains a lot of loopholes that allow for abuse of office by public officers, this is said by Zambia Land Alliance, an NGO that deals with land issues and has been championing the development of a pro-poor land policy. This act will be succeeded by a new Land Policy which is unfortunately still in draft form.

“Land should not be subject to the machinations of merciless speculation and manipulation. It is the most sacred and indeed the most highly prized of all natural resources and must therefore be made available to all on equal terms “ (His Excellency Dr. K.D. Kaunda “Humanism in Zambia and a guide to its implementation Part 2”)

It has been mentioned before: apart from laws inherited from the colonial era, Zambia has a long and traditional system of chiefdoms with corresponding laws. This causes a so-called dual legal system:

- The statute law gives the Ministry of Lands the right to allocate state land for a 99 years lease. All Zambians can apply for this land, although administrative requirements such as proof of capacity to develop land and filling out of several forms disadvantages vulnerable groups who have low incomes or are illiterate. A pre selection is often done through interviews by planning authorities to allocate new plots; this also favours certain groups such as civil officers and higher income groups.
- The customary law makes it possible for traditional leaders to allocate land in their own areas. The period of use is determined by the responsible chief. These laws are based on very traditional norms and therefore considered as unequal to women.

Upgrading of informal settlements

Compared to other countries in Africa, Zambia has a high urban population; studies show percentages of 40% to 50% in some districts. Since independence and accelerated by a major downturn in the economy in the 1980s, the urban population has increased. Due to the rapid growth of the urban areas the government and the local authorities could not cope with the provision of planned low-cost housing and infrastructure facilities. As a result unplanned and informal settlements have been developed as people were attracted to the possibility of building their own inexpensive houses. The houses are usually made from traditional materials and without basic services such as water or power. Nowadays these settlements are a permanent feature of many Zambian cities. As a reaction to this ongoing development

the Government of Zambia via the MLGH has enacted the Housing (Improvement) Areas Act, which allows local authorities to recognize and authorize existing buildings which do not conform to the Town and Country Planning Act.

The informal settlements can be upgraded through the provision of basic services and security of tenure via the issuing of land records. The recognition of informal settlements is an important step in the planning of local areas as it allows these settlements to become legalised, whereas previously the only official policy was demolition.

Local councils are responsible for identifying which informal settlements should be legalised and can make use of government funding to carry out programmes of physical improvements and regularising land tenure. Choma has carried out upgrading programmes in certain settlements but has to continue and improve its approach to the projects. The following settlements are subject to this law:

Name of settlement	Year of establishment	Population	No of households	Status
Mwapona	1947	12,526	1846	Not legalised, upgraded.
Zambia Compound	1957	18,663	2040	Legalised in 2004, has RDC
Overspill	1992	1,200	450	Legalised in 2004, since 2005 RDC
Kamunza	1961	1,676	785	Not yet legalised, upgrading to start soon
Chandamali	1961 (retired govt. workers)	4,882	718	In process of legalising and upgrading
Kachacha	1968	334	64	Not legalised or upgraded 80% muddy/grass roof
New Kabanana	2000	774	122	Not yet legalised, muddy 80%
Total		40,055 (20% total population)	6025	(average household size 6,6)

National Policy Framework

In 2006, the first National long term vision was published, expressing Zambia's aspiration by the year 2030. The vision is to be a, 'Prosperous middle-income country' by 2030. This vision will be implemented through 5 year development plans starting with the Fifth National Development Plan 2006-2010 (FNDP) and annual budgets. It was the first national vision for development and highlights several scenarios for development: the baseline, the preferred and the optimistic with corresponding indicators. The vision is based on 7 key basic principles which vary from sustainable development to upholding democratic principles and good traditional values, peaceful coexistence, respect for human rights, fostering family values and a positive attitude to work.

Fifth National Development Plan 2006 – 2010

As a result of the National Vision 2030, the present main policy on national development is found in the FNDP prepared in 2005 and currently work is being carried out on the Sixth National Development Plan (SNDP) as the period 2006-2010 will end this year. The theme of the FNDP is "Broad based wealth and job creation through citizenry participation and technological advancement." While the strategic focus is economic infrastructure and human resources development, the expenditure focus of the FNDP is on infrastructure, agricultural

development, health, education, water and sanitation and public order and safety. The FNDP consists of 31 sectoral plans and separate programmes for each of the provinces.

Institutional framework

The Ministry of Local Government and Housing (MLGH) is the main institution working on issues such as planning for housing, settlements and infrastructural provisions. The MLGH consists of the Department of Physical Planning and the Department of Housing and Infrastructure Development. The Department of Physical Planning (DPP) is charged with the responsibility of promoting orderly, co-ordinated and sustainable development of human settlement and balanced regional development. In various studies it is repeatedly concluded that public institutions tasked with facilitating housing development in the country remain very poorly resourced, highly centralised and ineffective.

The role of the MLGH is mainly that of policy making and supervision. Planning and regulation of actual development at city level is the responsibility of local authorities: City Councils, Municipal Councils and District Councils, with support from provincial authorities. These planning authorities are also responsible for water supply and sanitation often working closely together with private water utility companies, however always under supervision of the MLGH. The Ministry is guided by the following policies: National Housing Policy, Decentralisation Policy, and Water and Sanitation Policy.

National Housing Policy

The UN award winning National Housing Policy enacted in 1996 and prepared by the MLGH is considered a very comprehensive and visionary document with affordable housing for all income groups as the main priority through participatory and innovative means. According to the plan 15% of the total national budget each year should be allocated to housing. The UN report sums up the main aims:

- making serviced land available for housing development and streamlining the land allocation system;
- streamlining building standards, regulations, and other controls to meet the needs and capabilities of various segments of the population;
- encouraging the production and use of local and affordable building materials;
- helping the poor acquire decent shelter through alleviation of affordability problems;
- fostering housing areas that are functional, healthy, aesthetically pleasant, and environmentally friendly;

The community based organisations such as Residents development Committees (RDC) play a major role in facilitating development and implementing projects.

As this seems a very promising policy, recent studies show the void of this policy and unfortunately, hardly any of these objectives are being achieved. Moreover, when observing the actual housing situation on the ground, several question marks can be put after these hopeful provisions.

Decentralisation

Recently the government has approved the Decentralisation Implementation Plan (DIP); this plan should be a roadmap that will guide local authorities in their new roles and responsibilities resulting from decentralisation. The policy itself was published in 2002 stating: the vision of the government is to achieve a fully decentralised and democratically elected system of governance characterised by:

- Open, predictable and transparent policy making and implementation processes,
- Effective, community participation in decision-making,
- Development and administration of their local affairs while maintaining sufficient linkages between the centre and the periphery.

The timeframe given for implementation of this policy is 10 years, which means that in 2012 this policy will be enacted. It will cause major turmoil and movements throughout public institutions; however it is inevitable that the government has to undertake this transformation to dispose of the highly centralized and exclusive structure and systems inherited from the colonial era.

Regional Strategies and Planning

The main regional plan is the Provincial Strategic Plan 2008 – 2010 for Southern Province. The plan was originally being prepared in 2005 as a compulsory contribution within the framework of the FNDP, but left uncompleted till 2008 when it was finished with support from NGOs. The Strategic Focus is derived from the regional chapter in the FNDP and is: "Provision of infrastructure for the promotion of agriculture, education, tourism and health services."

Sectors included are: agriculture, forestry, tourism, roads, meteorology, health, education, land resettlement, water and crosscutting issues: HIV/AIDS, gender balance, and environment. All districts are required to submit information for the next plan period of 2011 - 2015 via their District Development Plan.

Local Strategies and Planning instruments

The planning instruments available to local planning authorities are all carried out under the national acts and policies. Although some major changes in legislation are in process the official procedures are bounded to the old means. The main instruments are the (District) Development Plans for Choma and several layout plans which are only drawn for formal settlements and have not been updated.

Choma District Development Plan 2006-2010

The District Commissioner and Choma Municipal Council jointly coordinated in 2006 the preparation of a District Development Plan bringing together recent development plans and budgets at the District level linked to the Provincial Development Plan and further to the Fifth National Development Plan. This Plan is produced every 5 years and conforms with the provincial and national development plans.

Like the other medium term planning instruments, the district development plan includes a very wide range of stakeholders from government departments, civil society organisations, private sector, district council and faith based organisations. Together these stakeholders formulate a vision and the prioritisation of programmes. The vision of the actual plan is: "a poverty free Choma by 2030" and in line with the other documents the strategic focus for the district is to:

- Improving feeder roads in order to transport agricultural produce to the markets, expand and diversify agriculture and enter markets especially for tobacco and cotton and control and elimination cattle diseases.
- Increase and balance access to education and reduce the major health problems such as HIV aids, child mortality, maternal healthcare, malaria.
- access to safe and clean water
- promote establishment of agro industries, manufacturing of small tools and agricultural equipment, promote training in business development skills and improve access to rural markets

For the next, SNDP period the district is preparing a new report, the vision and strategic focus remain the same. It acknowledges that the Funding was insufficient during the previous period of development plan due to the global financial crises and other factors. The areas of intervention for the plan period 2011-2015 are: Agriculture, Education, Health, Infrastructure development and Cross cutting issues: HIV /AIDS, Gender, Environment.

The sector analysis and resultant programmes are district wide and do not specifically focus on the urban area of Choma. It contains comprehensive objectives and corresponding strategies; however it gives neither a single map nor spatial information. The preparation of these plans is done under assumption of unconstrained financial resources. In this way it gives a misleading vision and can be presumed that very little has been realised at the end of the plan period.

Choma Development plan 1988-2018

The current land use Development Plan for Choma Township was prepared in 1988 by the Southern Province Planning Office, at that time the statutory planning authority for Choma and approved by government. The Plan was based on a thorough review of housing and employment needs for a projected population of 91,000 in 2018 whereas the actual population is over 200.000 in 2000 and is projected at 250.000 in 2010. It indicates a complete land use pattern and a road network for the township as well as planning policies to guide future development. .

This plan has been approved but never actively followed up or reviewed as a guide for planning decisions and supervising future developments. Choma has experienced a more rapid growth than expected in both formal and informal settlements. Also the infrastructure: amongst others, a ring road and a bypass for heavy traffic have not been provided due to insufficient funds. Today, issues such as the development of the centre, market and railway land that were highlighted in the plan still wait for revitalisation.

Integrated Development Plan

The concept of IDPs was developed and introduced in South Africa in the 1990s, at the municipal level as a tool of bringing together social, economic and land use planning, while focussing on key projects and involving full citizen participation. These broad principles will be found in the IDPs in Zambia, the detailed requirements are made by the MLGH to suit Zambian circumstances. Although IDPs will formally be introduced by the provisions of the Regional and Urban Planning Bill, Choma has anticipated this task by starting to prepare an IDP from 2008 onwards.

The Regional and Urban Planning Bill defines: *“integrated development” includes integrated social, economic, environmental, spatial, infrastructural, institutional, organisational and human resources upliftment of a community aimed at improving the quality of life of its members with specific reference to the poor and other disadvantaged sections of the community.*

From the Final draft of the Bill it can be presumed that the IDP shall be the principal planning instrument which guides and informs all planning and development. The process of the IDP is divided in separate stages, starting with an Inception Report, followed by a Status Quo Report and Spatial Framework, Key Projects & Funding and finally the IDP report. Each of the documents needs approval from the council as well as from the MLGH. Furthermore each stage will include participation and feedback from a wide range of stakeholders. At present the last steps are being made to the Status Quo Report and the final document is expected to be finished in a year's time.

The challenges for planning in Choma are formulated in the IDP Inception Report as tackling long standing problems of land use development in Choma Township, along with providing for the needs of continued population growth and housing demand, and trying to realise new opportunities for economic and social development. These provide a daunting set of planning challenges which the IDP for Choma Township must address.

The 4 Main Characteristics of the Choma IDP:

1. An Integrated and Focussed Plan: The IDP is intended to bring together, in an integrated manner the social, economic and land use planning for its area. It is about ensuring that all policies economic, social and land use reinforce each other, with the spatial element of the IDP being a key to its integration. Also, the IDP should focus on the key issues and as emerge from the survey of existing and prospective problems and opportunities.
2. A Plan for the Urban Area of Choma - The Bill requires Councils to prepare IDPs covering their whole area. However, it is proposed that Choma's IDP focuses on its main urban area, where the need for interventions through integrated planning is most needed.
3. A Plan for 2010-2015....and beyond to 2030 - IDPs are intended to focus on deliverable strategies for 5 years, set within realistic budgets. For land use and infrastructure the IDP will also look ahead to 2030, and seek to align itself with the vision of "A Poverty Free Choma by 2030" as set out in the Choma District Development Plan 2006-2010.
4. A Plan Owned by the Whole Community - An essential part of the new IDP system is that plans should be prepared in a transparent and participatory manner, ensuring a wide range of stakeholders that are engaged in the process of IDP preparation and are supportive of the final IDP and committed to its implementation.

In delivering this plan the key projects and issues will be the focus of intervention. At present the programs that are being explored comprise: regularising and integrating informal settlements as a high priority, rationalising release of land and development of new houses, creating new employment opportunities, providing infrastructure required to meet the needs of the existing and projected population and revitalization of the CBD, informal market and railway reserve land and re-functioning of this vacant land. On the latter there is a large opportunity of areas suitable for comprehensive innovative (re)development for export and trade oriented zones alongside the main corridor.

Land use and layout plans

Layout plans are the main instrument used for land and plot allocation. Although some of the maps are very outdated they are still the best available means and essential for daily work. In Choma the zoning process of a new development area, resulting in a layout plan, is a rigid and straightforward executed process commissioned to a single draughtsman. The drawing is done without consultation with other professionals or departments. After approval of the council the layout plan is sent for numbering and approval to the Ministry of Lands, which proves to be a lengthy process.

The layout plans will be replaced by (sectoral) Local Area Plans in the new Planning Bill and will require a more detailed, coherent plan. The concern about preparation of these plans lies in the human skills; in the whole Southern Province no architect can be found let alone an urban designer. The production of both urban and building plans are merely done by autodidact technicians who have often obtained some drawing skills in the mine or agricultural industry. Both Architecture and Planning degrees are available at University level in Zambia, no special education is provided for urban design.

There have been problems in releasing land for residential development as people are found to be building on wrong plots or roads or plots zoned for special functions are filled in with housing. Moreover building control is frustrated by the absence of building inspectors and surveyors. An inadequate capacity in institutions provides a fertile ground for problems such as corruption, illegal land allocations, illegal development and insecure land tenure.

Applications for development

The planning authority is responsible for scrutinizing of development or change of use. The council has a system of individual scrutinizing by different professionals as fire inspector, building inspector, health inspector etc.

The responsibility of developmental control will remain unmodified in the new Planning Bill. However, in Choma, in order to improve the standard of scrutinizing, a Building Committee has been established in which the former, individual scrutinizers discuss the plans as a team and a town planner has joined the team. They have a checklist for control of requirements which will be followed more strictly in the future. The main concerns however, are again on resources. Poor capacity by Planning Authorities to monitor and control development due to lack of skilled employees and equipment will have to be tackled if the council is to develop sufficient housing for its community. In addition the drawing companies in Choma are targeted for improving their work and better service to their clients.

Evaluation

Summary

It is clear that the present planning framework is on the eve of some radical changes in planning instruments. If all these changes are endorsed it will pass on large responsibilities to local government. At this moment, local government are not ready for the increased responsibilities in service delivery to its citizens, but one can question if that is not purposely maintained by central government. Another drawback of the new legislation and decentralisation is the vagueness about implementation; also the elections in 2011 might cause more delay.

Where there is no lack of plans there is a great shortage of finances and skilled, human resources. Instead of pursuing an aim, plans have a tendency of remaining on desks. From the spatial point of view, recent plans have not carefully dealt with the available land and entirely neglected urban design principles, which is a consequence of unavailable knowledge and tools.

<i>Present instruments now</i>	<i>Future instruments new</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lands Act of 1995 - Town and Country Planning Act - Housing (Statutory & Improvement Areas) Act. - 5th National Development plan 2006-2010 - Provincial development plan 2008-2010 - Choma District Development Plan 2006-2010 - Choma Development Plan 1988-2018 - Layout plan existing areas (from 60s, 70s) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Draft Land Policy - Regional and Urban Planning Bill - 6th National Development Plan 2011-2015 - Provincial plan 2011-2015 - Choma District Development plan 2011-2015 - Integrated Development Plan 2010 - 2030 - Local Area Plans and Sector Local Plans.

Improvement is possible in all government levels to fulfil their duties to their citizens. The way forward will be to assign responsibilities for integrated development plans to the appropriate, local level. This can drastically improve the active relation between government and civilians. Public awareness of housing rights is generally poor as most people do not understand the laws or have the means, although sensitising people with help from NGOs might be able to gain ground against this tendency.

The relationship between the different plans seems reasonably strong with linked development plans on national, regional and district level. Whereas the national plan has a long term focus both the regional and district development plans are limited to a defined, medium term of 5 years. This might frustrate developments that need a longer approach; the IDP will give a chance to relate long and short term provisions.

How can Planning instruments influence a more sustainable development? The proposed policies and plans contain more sustainable elements and the integrated approach will certainly enhance sustainable development. The challenges however faced in the developing world are fierce and will overshadow positive developments. The rising prevalence of HIV/AIDS, the severe poverty and mismanagement of funds are issues that show how fragile the development is.

Conclusions

Zambia is one of the most urbanized countries in Africa and faces major urban development challenges to a yet increasing urban population. Despite progress that has been made on the national economic level, the economic growth remains below the necessary levels and this constantly ranks Zambia among the world poorest nations.

High rural-urban migration along with rapid population growth, without a corresponding effort to provide appropriate housing in the expanding urban regions seems the main challenge for planning. However till today, both national government and local authorities fail to manage this challenge of rapid urban growth. Availability of good housing is an important condition to national development, as it is a basic social need. Inadequate housing, especially among the urban poor, has severe negative impacts on community wellbeing and the environment.

The newly introduced planning instruments aim to change the traditional, rigid means of planning into modernised and more sustainable methods. The planning instruments will provide an improved framework for sustainable planning and responsibilities are delegated to the appropriate local level. However these changes are not without some drawbacks and threats, some are however outside planning influence.

As the new planning instruments are not yet enacted and the IDPs that have been started as pilot projects are not yet finished let alone been implemented it is difficult to conclude whether the instrument will bring the positive effects that are widely expected. It will take several more years before the first results can be evaluated and suggestions on the instruments can be made. An important matter for success will be the question if the local governments are able to mobilise the needed resources and will be able to catch up with reality on the ground. The large differential between the (again) ideal plans and reality in the urban areas might cause a vacuum. As is common knowledge today, the traditional urban planning with a focus on objects and functions has failed to embrace the whole complex set of relations that make up our cities. But will the new planning instruments be better?

The dilemma continues:

Competition vs collaboration,

Is decentralisation an opportunity or threat? Decentralisation has to be implemented and ministries have to change from central control centres into supportive, knowledgeable counterparts to local authorities and provide them with sufficient funds and instruments. Apart from the professionals the councillors also will need training to fulfil their roles. It can be a great opportunity and decentralised planning has internationally been considered good practice. But it can become a threat when it is not carefully supported by the national government as it is easier to criticise local government than to do the work themselves.

Plans vs Output

Plans remain on desks far too often, is it sensible to make another plan when history shows that, due to difference reasons, nothing will be done? Implementation is crucial and needs a change from all stakeholders. NGOs have to focus more on the lasting changes instead of

quick changes. The Government should be ahead of development and take a pro active and inclusive approach.

Responsible vs Negligent

Community development groups can fuel the sensitising processes in areas where people are unaware of their rights as citizens. Cross cutting issues as HIV/AIDS, gender and poverty can only be beaten by full awareness and responsibilities towards our fellow citizens and future generation.

The last dilemma What perspective is there for Choma? This will depend on which side you are: a believer or a pessimist?

Written by Catelijne Elissen

Urban Planning and Design Professional at VSO – Zambia / Yacht -The Netherlands

References

- Central Statistical Office (2004), 2000 Census of Population and Housing, Southern Province Analytical Report, Vol. 8, Lusaka
- Choma Municipal Council (2008), IDP Inception Report for IDP, project team Choma
- Choma Municipal Council (2010), IDP Status Quo Report, project team Choma
- Choma Municipal Council, (2010), draft IDP Spatial Framework Report, project team Choma
- District Administration (2006), Choma District Development Plan 2006-2010, government printer
- Ministry of Education (2003), Choma District Profile, Report on the mobilisation campaign by the CHANGES Programme, Livingstone
- Ministry of Finance and National Planning (2006), Fifth National Development Plan 2006-2010, Summary, Lusaka
- Ministry of Local Government and Housing (2007) Final Draft Regional and Urban Planning Bill (version 2.0), Lusaka
- Office of the President (2002), The National Decentralisation Policy, Cabinet Office, Lusaka
- Provincial Administration Southern Province (2008), Provincial Strategic Plan Southern Province 2008 -2010, Livingstone
- Republic of Zambia (2006), Vision 2030, government printer
- Southern Province Planning Authority (1988), Choma Township Development Plan 1988-2018
- United Nations Human Settlements Programme (2008) Country Programme Document 2008 – 2009, Regional Office for Africa and the Arab States in Nairobi, Kenya,
- UN Habitat Zambia (2008) UPR Submission S2, Lusaka

Internet References (2010)

- | | |
|---|--|
| - Compact Oxford English Dictionary online | www.askoxford.com |
| - Ministry of Local Government and Housing | www.mlgh.gov.zm |
| - New South Wales State, Australia | www.planning.nsw.gov.au |
| - United Nations Development Program | www.undp.com |
| - USCensusBureau | www.census.gov |
| - Wikipedia: the world's free encyclopaedia | www.wikipedia.org |
| - Worldbank (2010) | www.worldbank.org |

Key words and key concepts:

Local governance in developing world, growing urban centre, land issues, planning procedures, peri-urban settlements, Integrated Development Plan, Zambia

Acronyms

- | | | |
|------|---|--------------------------------------|
| AIDS | - | Acquired Immuno-Deficiency Syndrome |
| CBD | - | Central Business District |
| DIP | - | Decentralisation Implementation Plan |
| DPP | - | Department of Physical Planning |
| HIV | - | Human Immunodeficiency Virus |
| IDP | - | Integrated Development Plan |

FNDP	-	Fifth National Development Plan
MLGH	-	Ministry of Local Government and Housing
NGO	-	Non Governmental Organisation
RDC	-	Residents Development Committee
SNDP	-	Sixth National Development Plan
UN	-	United Nations
VSO	-	Voluntary Services Overseas

Appendix 1

Data and Profile of Zambia and Choma (*Different sources*)

World population	6,800,000,000 [*]	(2009 UN)
Africa population	1,000,000,000	(2009 UN)
Zambia population	11,862,740	(2009 UN)
Choma population	249.969	(projected for 2010 in 2000)
Surface Africa	30,221,532 km ²	
Surface Zambia	752.610 km ²	
Surface Choma	7300 km ²	
HDI*	0,481	(2009, based on figures of 2007)
World bank ranking	164 of 182 countries	(2009, based on figures of 2007)
National life expectancy	44, 5	
Population 1990	7,900,000	
Population 2007	12,300,000	
Population 2020	16,900,000	
Population Growth rate	2, 6 %	
Choma		
Constituencies	3	
Chiefdoms	5	
Wards	27	
Villages	446	
Planning authority since	1998	
Council employees	105	
Museums	1	
Cinema	0	
Markets	3	
Altitude	1400 m	
Temperature	14C – 28C	
Population Rural	65%	
Population Urban	35%	
Main ethnic groups	Tonga, Valley – Tonga	
Female	51,3%	
Male	48,7%	
Life expectancy Female	47,6 years	
Life expectancy Male	41,6 years	
Ann population growth	2,3 %	

* HDI (Human Development Index) provides a composite measure of multi dimensional poverty, combining life expectancy, education outcomes and economic standards of living to provide a more meaningful understanding of the experiences and expectations of the poor. Zambia has one of the lowest HDIs in the world. In 2006, it was 44,8% which left Zambia ranking 96th out of the 138 developing countries. In 2009 The HDI for Zambia is 0.481, which gives the country a rank of 164th out of total 182 countries.