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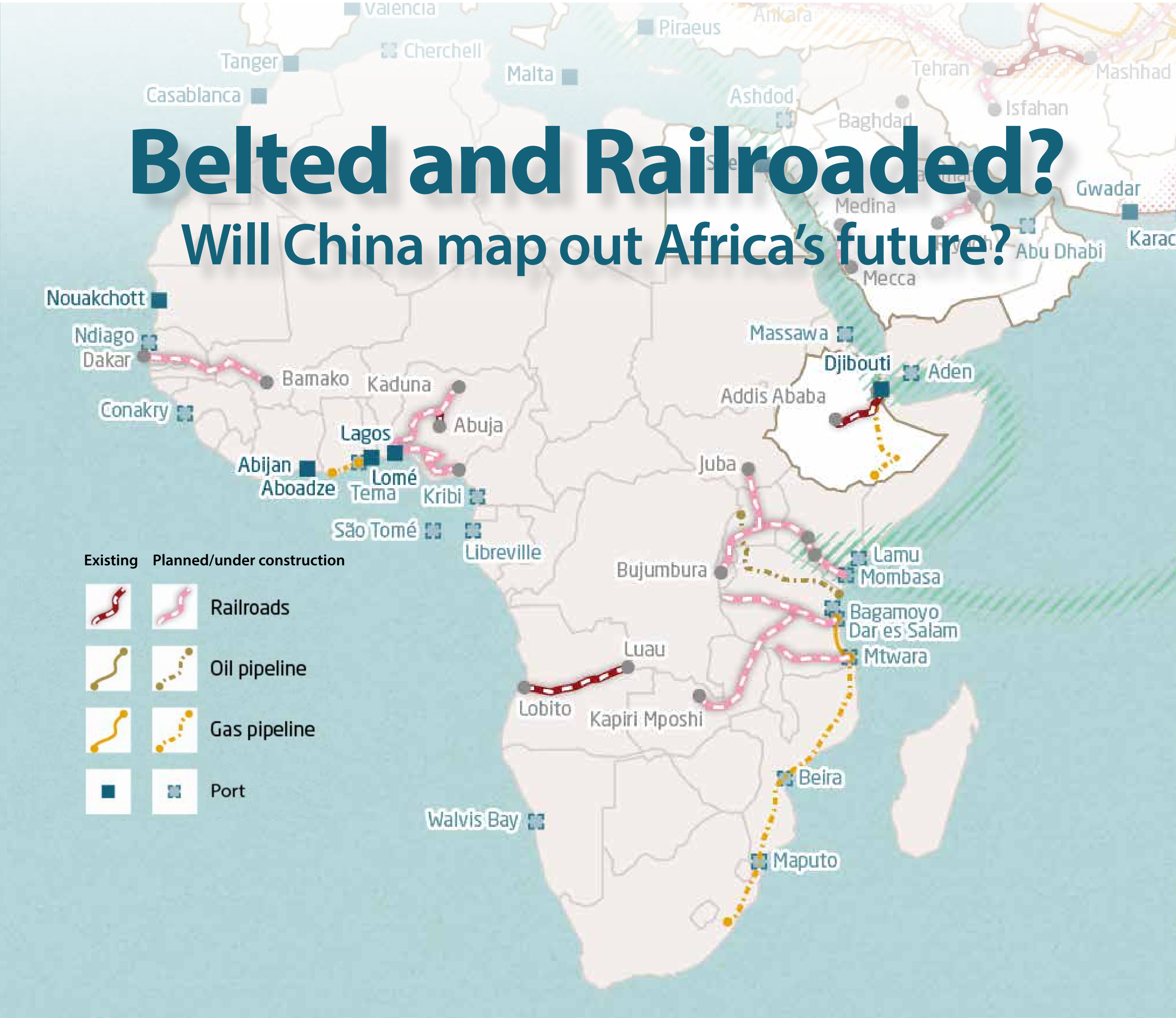
NEW AGENDA

SOUTH AFRICAN JOURNAL OF SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC POLICY

Belted and Railroaded?

Will China map out Africa's future?



Also inside:
The Communist Manifesto in a new edition for 2022
Remembering 16 June: Our youth are still struggling
Sara Dehkordi talks on forced removals SINCE apartheid

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New Agenda is a publication of the **Institute for African Alternatives (IFAA)**

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Cover: These are just some of the hundreds of infrastructure projects in Africa built by China.
Excerpt from Mercator Institute for China Studies (Merics). 2018. Mapping the Belt and Road initiative. Available at https://merics.org/en/tracker/mapping-belt-and-road-initiative-where-we-stand. IFAA extends thanks to Merics for the permission to reproduce its artwork.

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Issue 85

Youth Month –

Less to celebrate than ever before

The most urgent and arresting article in this edition of *New Agenda* is the comment on youth unemployment by Philippe Burger, which IFAA requested for our June edition because this is a time of year that we stop to consider what the sacrifices of 16 June 1976 mean today.

Burger just presents the bare statistics. He finds no solace in any of them. There is no sign at all that matters are improving – on the contrary, the abject failure of our public education system ensures that decline to even lower levels of despair and desperation are all that can be anticipated. Inequality and unemployment stoke anger. This is still unfocused – except where it appears in the execrable "movements" that target so called foreigners and illegal asylum seekers. The "insurrection" in 2021 tapped into the dissatisfaction with life as it is lived in South Africa today.

Nina Benjamin reports on a long-term engagement project by the Labour Research Service with unions representing healthcare workers. The deeply disturbing starting point is the outrage local communities express against health workers because of the poor and degrading standards of service provided at public clinics and state hospitals. Blame is attached to nurses and doctors – who were previously revered and protected – because they do not have the medication, bed linen, food and comforts that are needed by sick people. The article is a case study, but it reflects wide decay in institutions and the social fabric.

Muhammed Patel and Gaylor Montmasson-Clair at Trade & Industrial Policy Strategies (TIPS) find reasons for optimism in the dynamism and scope of Africa's Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs). As the effective economic engines of the continent's economies they will reward any society that concentrates investment and encouragement on their development. In this context, properly supported by wise governments, they could be levers for ensuring countries adapt to the increasing threats from climate change. Africa is responsible for less than 3% of the historical greenhouse gas emissions from industry that fuels the world climate crisis. But its communities are particularly vulnerable to the consequences of climate change. The key concern in Africa is not to reduce GHG emissions, but rather to adapt infrastructure, business and communities to deal pro-actively with climate disasters. MSMEs have considerable potential to reduce poverty and inequality, while at the same time assist economies and communities to be resilient in the face of climate disruptions.

Farieda Khan presents a fascinating historical review on mountaineering in Cape Town and how the sport has been, in effect, a site of struggle for human rights and opposition to apartheid, racism and segregationist practices.

There are summaries of two recent research projects commissioned by IFAA – one by Rachel Nyirongo comparing the social practices of a major mining company in three African countries, and one by Simon Rakei which links the complex issues of illicit financial flows from the African mining sector with a proposal on raising climate financing for a just transition. The full reports have been published on the IFAA website.

Moira Levy reports her impressions of a recent IFAA Forum at which Sarah Dehkordi discussed her decades-long investigation of forced removals in South Africa *after* apartheid – focusing on experiences of harried communities in Cape Town after 2000.

Jeremy Cronin, who has been closely involved with the recent publication of *The modern South African edition of The Communist Manifesto,* reflects on what may be learnt from (re)reading the Manifesto in 2022. The Communist Manifesto is the most influential political pamphlet in history.

Our cover story on China in Africa is not an expert view so much as a guide to readers on how to become better informed. China has become a major influence in Africa in the last two decades – often intervening with breath-taking swiftness, particularly on infrastructure projects. NA

What is China doing in Africa?

It's more complex than it seems – and more interesting

By Martin Nicol

Dr Nicol is the guest editor of the Institute for African Alternative's flagship magazine, *New Agenda*, and the senior researcher on IFAA's Checks and Balances Project. With a background in trade unionism and political activism, he retired from the research unit of the South African Parliament in 2019.

China's expansion has had a major impact in Africa over the last 20 years. This is part of a much larger worldwide challenge to the economic leadership of the US and Europe. In this article, MARTIN NICOL considers the role China is playing in Africa, particularly in economic infrastructure, and the need for great care in interpreting criticism – from the global south as well as the west – about 'Chinese debt-trap diplomacy'. China, and its dominant Belt and Road Initiative, need deep understanding.

We admire China because of its success. China's journey out of poverty, since the rule of the death-dealing ogre Chairman Mao, is unique in world economic history.

We admire China for the cheap clothes, machinery and appliances they export to us – and for the expensive Apple products "designed in California, assembled in China".

We admire China for its early civilization, and pursuit of science – the invention of paper, printing, gunpowder, the magnetic compass (and spaghetti!).[1]

And we deprecate China's exploitation and humiliation by the European powers, the US and Japan up to the middle of the last century. We also recall how South Africans of Chinese origin have been discriminated against over many generations.

Because of our history, however, we do not like China's policies towards Tibetans and Uighurs, and practices that debar some Chinese citizens from participating in elections. Having experienced censorship under apartheid, we are made uneasy by wide limitations on freedom of expression in other countries – in Eswatini and Zimbabwe as well as in China.

China's bigoted views have had an impact on our democracy. South Africa forced its public servants to lie about the non-attendance of the Dalai Lama at Archbishop Desmond Tutu's birthday 20 years ago. China would have been angry if he had managed to get a visa. In 2008, China suspended a multi-billion-dollar order for 150 Airbus aeroplanes and cancelled two trade missions to France after President Nicolas Sarkozy agreed to meet the Dalai Lama (Hartcher, 2021: 139).[2]

There is nothing cuddly about China – even if President Xi has been likened to a teddy bear. China gets angry easily. Just look at how Australia and Lithuania have been treated! Lithuania allowed Taiwan to open a Representative Office in Vilnius, its capital city.[3] China responded with a trade blockade. Australia called for an independent international inquiry into the murky origins of the novel coronavirus (Banyan, 2021). This led to a range of sanctions including the blocking of exports of shellfish and minerals to China. Peter Hartcher (2021) cites examples of 11 countries, big and small, where "Beijing imposed an economic penalty for a non-economic action". When Canada arrested an executive of the Chinese telecom giant, Huawei, in Vancouver on an international police warrant, China responded by holding two Canadian citizens effectively for ransom for more than two years. They became known as the "two Michaels" (Blanchfield and Hampson, 2021).

China is a powerful authoritarian state. It also the kingpin of the global economy – almost every supply chain ››

The African Union headquarters in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, designed, built and paid for by China

involves China. China began as a voracious importer of raw materials and technology, and the greatest-ever exporter of manufactured goods (based on cheap labour). In the last 20 years China has made a dramatic transition into a new geopolitical role.

China's role in Africa

What exactly is China's interest in Africa? How does it manifest itself? How does China differ in its interactions with African states compared to the traditional foreign interactors, interferers, investors and invaders of Africa – Britain, France, Portugal, Spain, Germany, Japan, the US (and going back in time, Belgium, Holland, Italy and Turkey)?

These are book-length questions. This article provides signposts for readers, and for politicians, academic institutions and companies who find themselves somehow involved with China.

The Institute for African Alternatives (IFAA) first became "involved" with China in 2015 when it co-hosted a two-day "Africa-China Colloquium" with the University of Cape Town Centre for African Studies and the Confucius Institute. The keynote address was delivered by the then Chairperson of the African Union (AU), Dr Nkosazana Dlamini Zuma. The event, on 21 and 22 May, was timed to accompany the sixth gathering of the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC) in Johannesburg.[4]

It's theme was *Evolving Sino-African Relations – Prospects and Opportunities.* The event raised the interesting question of whether Africa could have a "China policy" and what this should be. China seemed to have clear policy of its own for the continent!

FOCAC

FOCAC is a useful point of reference for looking at China in Africa. China says it was asked by African leaders to set up this joint forum in 2000, as Chinese interactions with countries in Africa expanded.[5] FOCAC was established in 2006 as the key institution shaping the Africa-China relationship with a major event in Beijing, attended by 50 African leaders. When former South African President Thabo Mbeki returned, he said Africa would need to tread carefully in dealing with China. The continent had to avoid a replication of Africa's historical relationship with its former colonial powers, where Africa just exported raw materials to China while importing Chinese manufactured goods (M&G, 2006; BBC News, 2006). To counter this interpretation, China started to pay more attention to its image in the media in Africa.[6]

By 2020, all countries in Africa had joined FOCAC – except for Western Sahara (where government is in dispute) and Eswatini (which recognises Taiwan). The African Union Commission joined FOCAC as a member in 2012 and has recently resolved to open a permanent AU mission in Beijing in 2022.[7]

FOCAC meets every three years – alternating between Beijing and African venues. The most recent FOCAC was hosted by Senegal in Dakar in November 2021 – although many participants attended virtually due to Covid-19. Barely a month's notice was given of the dates for the event.

Speeches and announcements at FOCAC can be used to gauge and interpret adjustments in the China-Africa relationship. FOCAC documents, all apparently edited in China, are replete with platitudes and repetitions and are invested with a fogginess that obscures intentions.

FOCAC has become the place where Chinese investment and infrastructure projects in Africa are announced – or re-announced. This began a decade before the emergence of the One Belt And One Road (OBAOR) strategy that became the Belt and Road initiative (BRI).

According to PhD candidate at the University of Johannesburg on Africa-China relations Hellen Adogo, "Africa and China have an imbalanced relationship as a result of the policy gap on the African side. ... The AU's ability to develop a common African policy on China would assert Africa's agency in Africa-China relations".[8]

Perspectives on the importance of Africa for China

China values Africa as a source for raw materials – oil, copper, cobalt, iron ore, bauxite (for aluminium), fish, timber and agricultural products. African countries have been, and still are, important for China. They often vote with China in international forums, supporting China's ambitions to challenge the US-dominated international geopolitical order. African countries were decisive in approving China's membership of the World Trade Organisation.

China is important for Africa as its largest trading partner and a significant source of foreign investment and loans for infrastructure and other development. Africa has a young and fast-growing population. This comes with a huge and expanding gap in infrastructure needs – for transport, electrical power and water to underpin new industries and jobs. China has stepped forward with loans for infrastructure projects in Africa when these were simply not available from the European Union and the US.

But Africa is not a first concern for China. Africa occupies the outermost "fourth ring" of countries important to China in the analysis outlined by Jonathan Fulton (2022). Africa's place in China's foreign policy is best interpreted now in terms of the BRI which was formally launched by President Xi in 2013.

BRI – the context for China's engagement with Africa

The BRI became possible because of China's huge economic success after it threw off the constraints of its centrally planned economy and moved to a hybrid system of capitalism and socialism. Unlike Russia, China maintained the rule of the Communist Party. China's initial adoption of market reforms after 1979 accelerated after 1999 with a policy of wider engagement with the world economy. Chinese trade exploded from US$400 bn to US$5,000 bn by 2019, after China was accepted as a member of the World Trade Organisation in 2001. The BRI is a creature of globalisation and the transport links required by integrated global supply chains.

The BRI has a name that harkens back to the "Great Silk Road" – a network of trading routes that linked China with Central Asia, the Middle East and Europe before the 16th century. The Silk Road Economic Belt (over land – "the belt") and the 21st century Maritime Silk Road (over the ocean – "the road") are metaphors that lurk behind China's transport infrastructure vision. Sea and river ports, container hubs, railways, roads, bridges and ports are being used, improved or built from scratch – to move goods for China. Infrastructure projects include electrical power plants, dams, industrial parks and public buildings.

By 2018 BRI projects were being implemented in 71 participating states – from Italy, Greece and Hungary to Pakistan and Kazakhstan – and in many African countries.

The BRI is about much more than infrastructure. The BRI is a vehicle for selling Chinese products, engineering and building services and facilitating overseas investments. China had huge excess capacity after its own infrastructure investment decades, when it turned towards meeting consumer demand and increasing consumption. The BRI takes up this excess capacity. It involves the Chinese government and its state-owned enterprises and banks, as well as Chinese private companies. But the BRI does not have any institutional structure. It is used flexibly, often just as a slogan, and envelops existing and previously planned undertakings (Carrai *et al*, 2020).

Since 2015, more Chinese exports have been high-value manufactured goods. And Chinese companies contracted internationally for huge infrastructure projects abroad that absorbed extra capacity in the steel and cement industries. This was accompanied by loans from China to pay for imports and services, which were framed to meet both political and developmental purposes. The BRI is the central platform for this economic policy and it provides the rationale for the strategic partnerships that China has developed both in Africa and beyond (Niblock, 2022). The original BRI has changed over time to move beyond physical infrastructure to communications and health interventions – referred to as the Digital Silk Road and the Health Silk Road.

The BRI has been welcomed by developing countries because it provides the infrastructure they want and need. Most projects are not aid – they are commercial projects intended to profit Chinese companies.

The BRI has been in place for more than eight years and there are astonishing statistics on the number of BRI-linked projects in Africa and their size and scope. It seems that the biggest Chinese investments are loans ›› made since 2000 to Ethiopia (rail), Kenya (rail and port) and Angola (rail). But the loans to Djibouti (port, rail) and Zambia (many things), for example, are very large when compared to the small size of these economies. China has financed, developed or operates over 35 big African ports (*The Economist*, 2021; See Devermont, 2019). Each involvement is different. Among the world's top ten terminal operators, three are from China, namely Hutchison Ports (Hong Kong), COSCO Shipping Ports and China Merchants (Wang et al, 2019). They operate ports in Europe and the Americas, as well as in Asia and Africa. Africa is a fraction of their business.

The US and Europe see the BRI – and China – as a major threat to their long-standing economic dominance across the world. A 2019 report by the European Commission (EC) said China could no longer be regarded as a developing country. Its economic power and political influence had "grown with unprecedented scale and speed, reflecting its ambitions to become a leading global power". The EC described China as "an economic competitor in the pursuit of technological leadership, and a systemic rival promoting alternative models of governance".[9]

The US used the G7 Summit in June 2021 to announce it would lead *Build Back Better World: An Affirmative Initiative for Meeting the Tremendous Infrastructure Needs of Low- and Middle-Income Countries*. In February 2022, the EU launched Global Gateway. Both initiatives were explicitly positioned to provide alternative, "standards based" alternatives to the BRI. However, funding and implementation intentions remain extremely vague in both cases and enthusiasm for providing resources to Africa has now been put on the back-burner as Europe and the US are diverted by the war initiated by Russian president Vladimir Putin in Ukraine.

While recognising the reality and success of many BRI infrastructure projects and acknowledging their contribution towards dealing with infrastructure gaps that retard African development, Western analysts have been sharply critical of the BRI.

To be sure, China has made mistakes. How could it not? But a lot of the criticism is incorrect and ill informed.

The most notorious criticism – spread by the *New York Times* and even the BBC – is directed at "the Chinese debt trap". This is the idea that China makes infrastructure loans to poor and reckless governments and then takes over the assets for itself when there is a loan default. This narrative has been frequently promoted by daily newspapers in Africa – particularly in Kenya, Uganda and Nigeria. The narrative is nonsense – proven so (Brautigam and Rithmire, 2021). But it is still repeated and may head a list of "Risks of the BRI" – some of which do have substance.[10]

- China tempts African countries to borrow more than they can ever repay, and leads them into debt crises where they become dependent on China, and susceptible to Chinese political pressure.
- The BRI creates unfair market access for Chinese companies, and stifles participation and competition from companies based in Europe and the US.
- BRI investments may lock African countries into Chinese technical standards and into a Chinese digital ecosystem from which they can never escape.
- BRI projects have exported hundreds of coal-fired power plants to Africa – meeting urgent energy needs, but undermining the global imperative to move away from fossil fuels.
- Chinese loans are secret. The terms are not disclosed to parliaments or to markets. This carries the danger that they will be unfavourable to African borrowers.
- Chinese projects avoid or side-step impact assessments, particularly on environmental issues. The actual societal costs of BRI projects for future generations are unspecified or unknown.
- Chinese projects are not open to competitive procurement – African countries pay far more than they need to and may end up with costly white elephants that have no economic purpose.
- The Chinese are bad at skills transfer. African countries are left with infrastructure they cannot maintain, use or expand themselves.
- The Chinese import their own engineers and senior staff and exploit and belittle African workers. In some cases, they do not employ any local workers, importing the entire labour force temporarily from China.

There are case studies that claim or prove all of these risks. But it is also true that China's business partners and counterpart governments in Africa have accepted these terms. Some call it African Agency. The 'blame' is not all on the side of the Chinese. And the annals of colonial best practice contain stories to dwarf every report of BRI risks (See Ruchman, 2017)!

An example: The Kenya standard gauge railway

In this age of Twitter summaries and WhatsApp viral videos it is easier than ever before to come to snap judgments. The following statement is totally true: "Chinese megaprojects and direct investment in Africa have been associated with environmental damage, corruption and labour abuses." But it tells only a tiny part of a story which is much more complex – and a lot more interesting.

As an introduction to complexity, readers of *New Agenda* are urged to read

> **China is … the kingpin of the global economy – almost every supply chain involves China.**

the CARI Policy Brief 62, entitled "How Africa Borrows From China: And Why Mombasa Port is Not Collateral for Kenya's Standard Gauge Railway". This masterful policy brief summarises in a few pages pathbreaking research on one aspect of the Kenyan government's decision to contract Chinese companies to build an expensive Standard Gauge Railway (SGR) to link the port of Mombasa with the capital city, Nairobi.

The report uncovers an error made by Kenya's Auditor General – who came to false conclusions on the funding arrangements to repay the US$4 bn loan to China's EximBank. The error led to a media and political storm that claimed the Chinese were entitled to take possession of the Mombasa port if Kenya defaulted on the loan. The SGR was reviled globally as another example of "Chinese debt-trap diplomacy" (Brautigam *et al.* 2022).[11]

Although the loan may be "in order", it will be difficult for Kenya to re-pay it – and the loan contracts signed with Chinese contractors and state-owned banks remain secret. President Uhuru Kenyatta broke a promise he made on television to provide the loan agreement to journalists. The SGR was very expensive – and there are many other writings on why this super-deluxe option was chosen by the Kenyans, instead of a cheaper upgrade of the existing railway built in the time of the British Empire. YouTube videos record the anger and desperation of Kenyan

Photo credit: Flickr

truck drivers after they were banned from transporting freight to Nairobi from Mombasa by road. The local economic effects of switching freight from road to compulsory rail have been devastating.

Conclusion

The story of China's involvement in Africa goes far back in history. The last two decades have seen the recording of many new chapters, as China has stepped in repeatedly to respond to the need of African countries for modern infrastructure. The volume continues to be written – and China continues to learn from its past experiences as it undertakes new ventures in Africa which move beyond infrastructure.

Thabo Mbeki voiced an early warning to Africa to be vigilant in guarding against relationships with China that replicated the dependencies created by the colonial powers. At the Colloquium on China-Africa relations that IFAA co-hosted in 2015 one of the speakers, Professor Lin Jiang of Sun Yat-sen University, Guangzhou, recognised this challenge and responded to it:

> If the principal and interest of a project loan … cannot be repaid, what should we do? Some people suggest the alternative that we can take related national natural resources as compensation. But this kind of move will inevitably raise suspicions in the international society, even may be called neocolonialism. Chinese leaders have refuted this kind of speech on several international occasions, emphasising that our country always upholds the good-neighbour policy and will never seek hegemony.[12]

Africa can take comfort from this – or not!

Editor's note – IFAA intended to commission an article for New Agenda on China and Africa to reflect on FOCAC 2021. Background reading showed that FOCAC lifts only a corner of the cloth hiding a picture of Chinese intentions in Africa. The article above tries to show the whole canvas. But it is just an invitation, and hopefully a guide, for readers to find out more for themselves.

There is an enormous amount of writing on China and Africa. Some is extraordinarily careless and misleading – even from sources such as the BBC, the Financial Times and the New York Times. Our favourite sources – featuring good writing and evidence-based research are: ➤➤

- *China Global South Project at https://chinaglobalsouth.com/ (if you listen to the free weekly "China in Africa" podcasts,you may be tempted to subscribe), and*
- *The China Africa Research Initiative, available at http://www.sais-cari.org*

They will both refer you to the sources they rely on – and those they criticise.

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ENDNOTES

1 See Joseph Needham's volumes on *Science and Civilisation in China* (Cambridge University Press 1954-2004).

2 "The Norwegian Nobel Committee awarded the Peace Prize to Chinese writer and democracy advocate Liu Xiaobo. China froze diplomatic contacts, suspended free trade negotiations and cut imports of Norwegian salmon, supposedly because of 'food safety' concerns. The sanctions remained in place for more than three years, until Norway buckled." (p. 140).

3 https://www.theguardian.com/world/2021/nov/19/china-condemns-opening-of-taiwan-office-in-lithuania-as-egregious-act

4 https://chinaafricaadvisory.com/focac/

5 A similar request was made in 2004 by Middle-Eastern states that led to the establishment of the China-Arab States Cooperation Forum (CASCF), a multilateral organisation established to coordinate relations between China and the 22 Arab League states (Fulton, 2022).

6 Prof Chris Alden (LSE) in University of London School of Advanced Studies webinar on China and media in Africa. 29 March, 2022. Available at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=01kU0_aUJx4

7 https://www.ghanaweb.com/GhanaHomePage/africa/African-Union-to-open-mission-in-Beijing-1465114

8 https://www.dailymaverick.co.za/article/2022-03-07-the-african-union-cannot-go-to-beijing-without-an-action-plan/

9 https://ec.europa.eu/info/publications/eu-china-strategic-outlook-commission-contribution-european-council-21-22-march-2019_en. Also see Jungbluth and Walkenhorst (2021).

10 (Olander, 2022) Listen, for example, to the often even-handed discussion hosted in January 2022 by the New York-based non-profit Network 20/20 with Gyude Moore from the Center for Global Development in Washington and Jennifer Hillman from the Council on Foreign Relations. Available at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5aMxyz9mULc

11 Readers can listen to a discussion with the authors of CARI Policy Brief 62. The China in Africa podcast is available at https://chinaafricaproject.com/podcasts/the-port-of-mombasa-was-never-at-risk-of-being-seized-by-china/

12 Professor Lin Jiang of Sun Yat-sen University, Guangzhou, in a paper read at the China-Africa Colloquium 21-22 May, 2015, University of Cape Town, South Africa. NA

Adapt or die:
Small businesses are the gateway to Africa's climate resilience

By Muhammed Patel and Gaylor Montmasson-Clair

Muhammed Patel and Gaylor Montmasson-Clair are Senior Economists at Trade & Industrial Policy Strategies (TIPS). This article draws on a TIPS and Caribbean Natural Resources Institute (CANARI) report produced for the Global Commission on Adaptation (GCA), accessible on the TIPS website.

Responsible for only 3% of historical greenhouse gas emissions, the African continent is set to bear the brunt of climate impacts, which will further jeopardise the continent's chances to achieve sustainable development, worsening food security, livelihoods, population displacement, health and education, and halting and regressing development. MUHAMMED PATEL AND GAYLOR MONTMASSON-CLAIR argue the need to ramp up climate adaptation on the continent is urgent – in fact, it is a matter of life and death.

The impacts of climate change are brutally unequal. And African economies are – once more – at the wrong end of the stick. The continent's small businesses, if supported, offer an opportunity to enhance Africa's climate resilience as well as foster socio-economic development. Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) are the engines of African economies and societies. They are key economic players driving inclusive and sustainable development. MSMEs contribute substantially to economic production and employment and have considerable potential to reduce poverty and inequality. They improve livelihoods of communities by stimulating local investments and providing employment to large parts of the population (Creech *et al.*, 2014; ILO, 2018).

Further, MSMEs link into local economies and contribute to social cohesion by integrating diverse populations (OECD, 2018a). They are also a pathway to inter-generational development and social growth (Page and Soderbom, 2015), promoting the inclusion of disadvantaged groups of society, particularly women, immigrants and minority groups (Groepe, 2015; NPC, 2011). Finally, they underpin development in rural areas, with many people deriving their livelihoods from family businesses in agriculture and retail.

Small businesses and climate risks

The climate risks that African MSMEs face are compounded by existing economic and social challenges that constrain their ability to respond. This is further exacerbated by the shift from carbon-intensive production processes and the impact of this transition on the socio-economic health of African countries. MSMEs face climate change-related risks which can be categorised into physical and transition risks (TFCD, 2017; Wei and Chase, 2018).

Physical risks relate to direct climatic hazards inflicting damage to infrastructure such as power supply, railways and roads and other assets such as buildings, factories and capital equipment, as well as people and communities. Acute physical risks are event-driven and refer to short, intense and largely unpredictable climatic events, such as cyclones, hurricanes, wildfires and floods. Chronic physical risks refer to long-term shifts in climate patterns, such as droughts, rising sea-level, rising temperatures and chronic heat waves.

> **The climate risks that African MSMEs face are compounded by existing economic and social challenges that constrain their ability to respond.**

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Transition risks result from the changes required to shift to sustainable development pathways (IPCC, 2014; McKinsey, 2015; TFCD, 2017; WEF, 2018; Wei and Chase, 2018). As economies and societies move to a low-carbon and climate-resilient model as part of a broader sustainability transition, the operating environment of MSMEs and other businesses is transforming. Policy risks emerge as changes in regulatory and legal frameworks affect business operations. MSMEs increasingly need to shift to low-carbon, climate-resilient business models and operations to avoid carbon taxation and penalties, comply with regulations on resource-use efficiency or avoid climate change-related litigation.

Technology risks originate from the improvements and innovation triggered by the transition, such as renewable energy, resource efficiency, e-mobility and integrated smart technologies. These technologies displace old solutions and can quickly render traditional businesses unattractive, uncompetitive and/or obsolete. Market risks are driven by the shifting demand for goods and services as the transition unfolds. Reputation risks materialise as customers penalise firms for their negative climate-related impacts and/or their lack of action to mitigate them. Brand damage may have long-lasting impacts on business operations, possibly affecting sales but also partnerships, valuation and access to, as well as cost of, capital.

At the local level, many risks cannot be controlled as they depend on national-level policy-making and/or external global macro-economic factors. MSMEs can, however, implement adaptation measures to counter the negative impacts of such events. This requires MSMEs to adjust their systems to maintain their production capabilities under changing conditions (PRISE, 2018). The nature of a business also has implications for its ability to withstand climate change-related risks. While MSMEs are versatile and capable of considerable adaptation, larger and formal enterprises tend to have higher degrees of resilience due to higher human, institutional and financial resources (WRI and UNDP, 2015).

A higher degree of integration into value chains strengthens resilience for MSMEs, although it comes with its own sets of risks. Impacts within a value chain can trickle down to the operations of a MSME or other businesses, by disrupting access to raw materials, intermediary products, energy, water or any other inputs into the production process. The lack of climate-compatibility of a business's supply chain can also lead to market and reputational damage, particularly for MSMEs that do not have control over their supply chains. Impacts can also trickle-up from customers. MSMEs supplying large leading businesses may face significant pressure to transition to low-carbon and climate-resilient operations to maintain supply contracts. Climate change risks, either physical or transition, may also have negative impacts on an MSME's market. Their sales may face dire consequences if clients are negatively affected by climate change, either reducing their purchases or even closing down.

Adaptation in Africa and the crucial role of MSMEs

So what is the state of adaptation in Africa? Four inter-related perspectives – policies and interventions; infrastructure, markets and ICT; finance; and data, information and capacity development – provide an insight into the levels of resilience on the continent.

Policies and interventions encompass

institutional and governance arrangements, regulatory frameworks and policies. Regulatory frameworks and policies refer to climate change adaptation policies at national and regional levels, building standards and codes, local zoning rules, private sector development policies and climate change considerations integrated into policies supporting the development of the private sector and/or MSMEs (Crick *et al.*, 2018).

At the global level, institutions such as the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) have supported countries to develop strategies to address climate adaptation. This is achieved through the support of National Adaptation Plans (NAPs).[1] In 2021, only 22 out of 154 developing[2] countries completed their NAPs and 126 still have their adaptation plans in draft form. Some African countries are nevertheless more advanced. Kenya, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Kenya and Sudan have already established NAPs. In 2020, South Africa also released its National Climate Change Adaptation Strategy. Overall, the levels of policy readiness and support to achieve it are vastly insufficient. And the implementation of the NAPs brings a whole new set of interrogations.

MSMEs play strong institutional roles in communities to identify cost-effective solutions to increase adaptive capacity. MSMEs are typically concentrated in the agricultural, fisheries, forestry and community-based tourism sectors, but also foster informal and formal support networks, such as farmers' groups, business partnerships and cooperatives within a sector or region. These networks can enable formal and informal enterprises to overcome capacity challenges through pooling resources, improved information sharing and dissemination, co-financing and risk-sharing (WRI and UNDP, 2015). Initiatives like the International Fund for Agricultural Development finance partnership building in the agricultural sector. Formal and informal support networks, such as agricultural cooperatives and women's groups, have been crucial in building the adaptive capacity of agricultural small businesses in countries such as the Gambia and Kenya (Atela et al., 2018; FAO, 2012). These social networks have been important for women-led businesses in Kenya's semi-arid lands, for example, to more actively engage in adaptation planning and actions at the local level through supporting each other. Yet the support MSMEs and their networks receive remains far too small and piecemeal to trigger a structural improvement to the continent's resilience.

Infrastructure, markets and ICT refer to the availability of, and access to, basic infrastructure, such as transportation, internet, water and electricity as well as business zones and centres (Crick *et al.*, 2018). In African settings, infrastructure tends to be developed to a lower degree than wealthier nations. An adaptation focus in infrastructure provision here is paramount. Maladaptation, i.e. actions aimed at increasing resilience that in fact lead to increased risk of adverse climate-related outcomes, is still too common. An increased adaptation focus can also open up new market opportunities for MSMEs (Montmasson-Clair *et al.*, 2019). In South Africa, a greater sustainability focus by fresh produce retailers, for example, encourages MSMEs to adapt and increase resilience by undertaking investments to *green* their businesses, increasing their resilience and producing goods in a sustainable manner, and providing them with the opportunity to enter established value chains (Patel, 2019). The marketing and sale of climate-resistant rice seeds in northern Uganda saw vulnerable farmers reduce their vulnerability to climate hazards (IISD, 2016). This was evident through improved production yields and a lower sensitivity to pests, diseases and climate hazards, notably droughts. In that case, the proximity of a MSME seed supplier to consumers (typically closer than larger businesses) also assisted farmers with flexibility of supply in times of need.

The *financial* environment refers to the availability and access of MSMEs to adaptation-related government incentives, financial instruments and insurance schemes. Governments can also ensure that finance for MSME adaptation is available and adequate through the roll-out of economic incentives and funds for climate adaptation. Resource mobilisation issues can hinder the implementation of adaptation measures by MSMEs despite increased climate awareness and understanding of viable adaptation options.

The International Finance Corporation indicates that between 200 and 245 million formal and informal MSMEs worldwide are still unable to access financial and risk management instruments, such as loans, insurance, credit and venture capital (Stein *et al.*, and IFC, 2010). It is further estimated that MSMEs suffer an approximate US$2 trillion gap in financing globally. Problematically, MSMEs in developing countries typically have limited capital or assets to cover high upfront costs for adaptation, and are perceived as having a high-risk profile by financial institutions (Crick *et al.*, 2018; OECD, 2018b; SEED, 2015; UNEP, 2018a; WRI and UNDP, 2015).This is particularly true for the informal sector in which more than 50% of MSMEs operate. While formal MSMEs may be able to access micro loans or grants up to US$10 000, larger amounts of US$20 000-250 000 are generally inaccessible (SEED, 2015; World Bank, 2007), which significantly limits opportunities to scale up. MSMEs in Africa have unfortunately been neglected in adaptation financing historically (UNEP, 2018b . This lack of access hampers MSMEs from implementing adaptation measures. Given that investments in adaptation » measures by businesses generally involve large upfront costs, relatively long payback periods and climate uncertainties, improving resource mobilisation and securing financing for MSMEs to invest in adaptation is key (WRI and UNDP, 2015).

Financial risk mitigation products have been gaining traction in recent years. However, there is a lack of appropriate risk-transfer finance mechanisms, such as micro insurance arrangements that are available and accessible to MSMEs to adapt. The uptake of such products depends on the consumer's risk perception, which is context-specific. Risk transfer products such as insurance can provide income security, protecting vulnerable MSMEs through smoothing consumption and lessening the financial and economic shocks of adverse climate events. Yet certain consumers are unable to purchase insurance, particularly if they are insuring high-risk activities. For vulnerable groups such as MSMEs, affordability is crucial for uptake.

Data, information and capacity development concern the availability of data and information systems that predict future weather patterns, provide risk assessment and decision-making tools, and provide information on adaptation measures, as well as their cost and applicability to different MSMEs in differing regions and sectors (Crick *et al.*, 2018).Capacity development relates to the availability of adaptation training programmes, research institutions focusing on adaptation, forums and conferences on climate change, agricultural extension and centres that focus on training and technology development.

Limited access to climate data and information on locally-appropriate adaptation options hinders the ability of the majority of MSMEs to effectively plan and adapt as it creates an environment of uncertainty (Okereke *et al.*, 2012; UNEP, 2018a; WRI and UNDP, 2015). This gap is particularly stark for MSMEs in African countries. The challenge of limited access to information also affects key stakeholders, such as governments, businesses and the general public. As consumers and promoters of adaptation-related goods and services, stakeholders require knowledge and data on adaptation, the available options and the best choices. Uncertainties over future climatic changes also reduce the attractiveness of investing in adaptation if there are no cost savings or requirements for compliance with specific legislation or standards.

Poor awareness about climate risks and uncertainties (either because information is unavailable or inaccessible) makes it difficult for African MSMEs to successfully incorporate these risks into their business planning and decision-making. This information must furthermore be available to firms in a format that is understandable and actionable. Entrepreneurs also need to be empowered to understand the business case for adaptation, know the available appropriate and cost-effective adaptation measures and why they stand to benefit from investing in adaptation. Difficulties in choosing among adaptation interventions when multiple options are available are also inherent. MSMEs lack the tools and knowledge to evaluate these options. Capacity to assess adaptation options and plan adaptation strategies require a certain level of technical knowledge which is not always available to MSMEs in low- and middle-income countries.

Governments, in collaboration with development partners, academia and private sector actors (such as chambers of commerce and industry), can support education and training on adaptation measures for MSMEs and other businesses. Building capacity on the proper use of climate information and tools to incorporate climate risks into business planning, budgeting and implementing adaptation measures is required to successfully enable MSMEs' adaptation. For instance, the Proadapt programme in Latin American and Caribbean countries could be extended to African settings. It involves market assessments of climate risks within the relevant sectors; awareness-raising and outreach to local enterprises, resource users and other stakeholders; and training and implementation in adaptation strategies to address climate risks. It also seeks to promote business opportunities related to adaptation through improved access to market intelligence and business advice.

A vision for the future

The evidence thus far is irrefutable. African MSMEs face severe challenges related to accessing climate data and information on locally appropriate adaptation options; have difficulty in choosing among options; face limited access to the appropriate finance; lack technical skills and tools for small business development and management; lack appropriate risk-transfer mechanisms; face unfavourable business environments; and have to navigate socio-cultural barriers.

Furthermore, a multi-stressor view points to the importance of understanding the complexities of different impacts and how climate change vulnerability overlaps with other socioeconomic challenges, such as poverty and inequitable access to resources. Strong context-specific factors need to be considered when thinking about increasing the resilience of small businesses.

Importantly, MSMEs do not have to be limited to increasing only their resilience. MSMEs can also act as *solution providers* – proliferators of adaptation-related goods and services. MSMEs are vital conduits through which adaptation technologies and goods can spread. They account for substantial shares of employment; are closer to local communities and households, which translates into a greater understanding of their needs; and tend to have a greater

> **MSMEs play strong institutional roles in communities to identify cost-effective solutions to increase adaptive capacity.**

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capacity to test innovative and flexible business models (Montmasson-Clair and Mudombi, 2019).

While support for adaptation is gaining traction, the pace needs to be ramped up substantially. The economics of adaptation are dynamic and evolving. While adaptation is still considered relatively costly compared to mitigation, many adaptation-related interventions also bring positive socio-economic spillovers. As part of a just transition, adaptation ought to be prioritised. The need for an enhanced role for climate-sensitive decision-making and supporting MSME resilience to climate change is clear. Looking ahead, African countries can scale adaptation efforts through four key channels.

From a policy and institutional perspective, *African governments have to integrate an adaptation lens into central decision-making.* Many African countries have not yet fully articulated their adaptation responses to climate change. Policy-makers may not fully understand the complexities related to climate adaptation, how these complexities interrelate with other developmental priorities and how to move forward. This risks generating inadequate or misinformed policies while climate change presents new challenges and worsening existing ones. The path dependency of governance systems needs to be broken so that they can be more responsive to current and future needs and challenges. A starting point for governments is developing internal capacity in assessing the vulnerabilities of geographies and sectors in the economy, including the vulnerability of MSMEs, and drawing from the experience of neighbouring/similar countries. By forming dedicated institutions that assess, communicate and plan adaptation strategies, governments can track the extent to which the entire economy is resilient to impacts. Effective adaptation strategies for MSMEs need to be developed with them. Mechanisms for effective input of MSMEs, particularly informal and micro-enterprises where the most vulnerable work, into decision-making institutions should be created or strengthened.

Along with this, *new and innovative risk-transfer mechanisms require upscaling*. Financial security measures, such as risk-transfer products, also have their place in protecting vulnerable enterprises. Development of such products has to draw on the expertise of the insurance industry, financial regulators and governments. Governments can lead by engaging with the financial and insurance industries that are capable of assessing risk. These industries can be harnessed to provide insurance products that target MSMEs and assist governments.

From an infrastructure, markets and ICT perspective, *greater support is required to address basic resource deficits that MSMEs face*. MSMEs in African countries lack access to basic resources, such as infrastructure, fundamental business knowledge and management skills, and technology. The formation of business development hubs that provide MSMEs with knowledge on business management, financial statements, formulating business plans, managing costs, and supplier and consumer relationships are fundamental business support measures. This would help overcome steep learning curves early on. The development of a strong business model, the ability to leverage financing through multiple streams and the use of ICT (to enable access to new online markets notably) can be strengthened through dedicated support institutions. Supporting MSME associations and other bottom-up peer-support mechanisms created by MSMEs would also be valuable.

Further, *a conducive business environment for MSMEs to flourish must be promoted in African countries*. Numerous challenges continue to hamper the »

> **As part of a just transition, adaptation ought to be prioritised.**

success of MSMEs. These include unclear regulatory and tax regimes, long permit approval periods and weak contractual enforcement. Poorly developed physical infrastructure limits the extent to which entrepreneurs can explore various production, transport and marketing options. The state should also ensure that regulatory hurdles for MSMEs are not onerous and that contractual law is upheld.

In addition, *proactive adaptation by large businesses can promote adaptation by stakeholders along their value chains including MSMEs.* The extent to which large entities embrace resilience has a bearing on MSMEs' resilience. Increasingly, large businesses have begun to embrace climate change fundamentals into their operations and supply chains. These large businesses clearly stand to benefit, as increasing the adaptive capacity of their value chain enhances security of supply and their brand image. Policies that seek to nudge larger players to support adaptation by MSMEs can transition sectors towards becoming more resilient. A suite of government instruments, including targets, licensing requirements and incentives, can stimulate such adaptation activity in markets.

From a data, information and capacity development perspective, *MSMEs have to be empowered to understand the risks they face and why adaptation is important.* While adaptation needs are evident, action is constrained by the often long-term, uncertain and misunderstood nature of the risks. The state can drive interventions that promote knowledge generation and transfer within and among MSMEs so that they understand the adaptation processes and markets. This can be aided by each country identifying priority sectors, relevant MSMEs, their competencies and the risks they face. Capacity building interventions must recognise and build on competencies MSMEs already have. Interventions should include mentoring, coaching, peer learning and support. Reforming existing business support programmes, whether by government or other actors, to better address the needs of MSMEs is also crucial.

Social learning is also a potent force to be leveraged in Africa. Learning is crucial for providing lessons from past experiences and from other people, areas or systems. Greater investment in participatory monitoring and reporting tools, which allow for iterative learning and adjustments, is needed. It is also necessary to embrace various forms of knowledge when attempting to incentivise MSMEs to increase resilience. Particularly, there is a need for the state and donor organisations to create institutions that can navigate the complexities and complementarity of indigenous and modern (scientific) knowledge and practices. This capability assists in overcoming social friction between traditional practices and newer, innovative ones.

Then, *adaptation requires cooperation, linkages and partnerships between multiple actors along the value chain.* Successful adaptation is required at both the individual and group level. While individual action can enhance individual resilience, more system-wide resilience is required. Win-win solutions can be achieved when stakeholders collaborate on solutions with better understanding of the challenge and are equipped with appropriate technical skills to address the challenge. Partnerships and linkages to wider knowledge networks, such as through government, public and private enterprises, labour unions, civil society organisations and researchers, allow for innovation and pooling of resources to address climate-related shocks and take advantage of new opportunities.

From a financial perspective, *funders have to be mindful of the delicate intricacies of entrepreneurship and adaptation finance.* MSMEs face financial constraints, particularly in the early stages of development. Financial institutions need to be empowered to serve as climate-sensitive decision-makers that understand the need for adaptation and the risks involved in undertaking adaptation-related investment with MSMEs. Since adaptation is based on forward-looking assessment of risks, financial institutions need to tailor expectations on a fundamental understanding of this uncertainty. For some adaptation investments, markets may be new and untested. Financiers may not understand the broader climate goals that are achieved through adaptation investments, as they over-emphasise profitability and returns in providing funding. Financiers need a fundamental understanding of this business context and tailor financing based on these constraints.

Also, *strengthening the resilience of climate-sensitive sectors goes hand in hand with diversifying through new, green opportunities.* There is a strong correlation between labour-intensive sectors and climate-sensitive sectors, which implies that climate impacts will have direct implications on MSMEs and employment. Ensuring that MSMEs thrive in the face of climate change is necessary to safeguard existing employment and create new employment activities. Many MSMEs in African countries are highly dependent on climate-sensitive sectors or areas. As part of fostering new opportunities, the state has a role to play in enabling the growth of "green" activities. Reducing the dependency on climate-sensitive sectors by diversifying into more resilient sectors is one strategy for reducing the climate and employment risk. Physical and socio-economic environments may, however, impair and limit the ability of MSMEs to diversify into alternative economic activities, hence the need for the state to create a conducive and enabling environment for more product and process innovation.

The above set of interventions is critical to enhance the resilience of Africa's MSMEs and foster their sustainable development, in turn underpinning the adaptation of African economies and societies. But the road to resilience for Africa is long and treacherous, too often a lonely place to wander and get lost. Having a chance to achieve sustainable development in Africa requires a global just transition, in line with the principles of international solidarity and "common but differentiated responsibilities" embedded in the international climate regime. It requires a global compact to support adaptation in Africa (and other low- and middle-income countries), including restoration for loss and damage. Else, African societies will, once more, be left behind – to die.

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ENDNOTES

1. While NAPs are not MSME-centric, they seek to build overall resilience of the economy, of which MSMEs and other businesses are a component. Such an initiative is a step in the right direction in proliferating adaptation-thinking.
2. This definition includes low- and middle-income countries and the Least Developed Countries. Least Developed Countries are defined as those countries with low income, weak human assets and high economic vulnerability. See (UNFCCC, 2009) NA

International migrants and the world of work in SA

Exposing the 'job stealing' lies of the xenophobes

By Dale T McKinley

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Claims that countless foreign nationals are forcing South African citizens out of the formal and informal labour markets abound in the current discourse linked to xenophobic violence. In this argument DALE MCKINLEY describes such claims as lies and warns that they are stoking the fires of dangerous violence.

Xenophobic attitudes, politics and activities have always been a feature of both apartheid and post-apartheid South African society. However, it was not until the first large-scale xenophobic violence erupted in South Africa back in 2008 that the specific claim of "foreign nationals taking jobs" began to be more widely deployed. Since then, and throughout various iterations of xenophobia that have played themselves out on the terrain of South Africa's body politic, this claim has taken centre stage and has come to be accepted as fact by sizeable sections of the population.

In and amongst the plethora of other claims directed at international migrants, such as being disproportionately responsible for crime and more particularly drug-dealing, that of "taking jobs" has now come to dominate the general discourse of the latest crew of xenophobes. These include Herman Mashaba and ActionSA; the Gayton Mackenzie/Kenny Kunene duo of the Patriotic Alliance (PA); the mis-named African Transformation Movement; the putative uMkhonto we Sizwe Military Veterans Association (MKVMA); the social media scoundrels of "#PutSouthAfricaFirst"; the so-called "RET" faction of the ANC; the ministries of Home Affairs and Labour; and the most recent addition in the form of political performance artist Nhlanhla Mohlauli and his "Operation Dudula" rent-a-crowd.

In one form or another, they have all engaged in an all-out propaganda war grounded in a concocted, pre-packaged and false narrative of "foreign nationals" as job-stealing villains. Not only has such a narrative found fertile ground within significant sections of the majority of South Africans who are economically poor and politically marginalised, it has now been given some legislative content through the recently introduced National Labour Migration Policy (NLMP). The NLMP will now "reserve" certain economic sectors for those who hold South African citizenship and set quotas "for the employment of documented foreign nationals in major economic sectors".

This "job-stealing" propaganda package is, at one and the same time, de-historicised, deceitful and dangerous.

One of the crucial ingredients that sustains the false narratives of right-wing, populist demagoguery is the manipulation of history and facts, wherein political and socioeconomic context and content are selectively and manipulatively remembered and applied. In this case, the xenophobes want people to forget or simply ignore the reality of a post-1994, anti-poor and anti-worker economic policy framework and practice (by both the public and private sectors) that has, over the last 25 years, led to the casualisation of work becoming the dominant feature of South Africa's world of work landscape; and no more so than for international migrants.

It is this consciously planned and seismic shift in the world of work that has fed a continuous and intensified attack on the working conditions and quality of life for the vast majority of the work force in South Africa, whether

[There is] an all-out propaganda war grounded in a concocted, pre-packaged and false narrative of "foreign nationals" as job-stealing villains.

Photo credit: Wikimedia Common

citizen or international migrant. This has been further abetted by several other historical developments: the failure of the ANC-run state (at all levels of government) to solidify and sustain the provision of basic services and needs; the profit-at-all-costs, divide-and-conquer approach of employers; the proliferation of local economic and political mafias operating in the small retail and housing spaces; and foreign policies and actions in the region that have privileged support for oppressive political regimes and contributed to the destruction of local economies.

A comprehensive statistical study carried out by the Studies in Poverty and Inequality Institute in 2017 found that the "fastest rise in employment since 2008 has been in the informal sector" (McLaren, 2017) while the National Labour and Economic Development Institute (NALEDI) estimates that between 2000 and 2017, non-permanent work increased by an incredible 371% (2019). This historical trend has only been turbo-charged by the last two years of pandemic-related socio-economic austerity, out-of-control profit gouging and nationalist economic chauvinism. Not surprisingly, it is this ever-expanding and hugely precarious world of casualised work – encompassing both the "informal sector" and certain parts of the formal sector – that "houses" the vast majority of international migrant workers.

These workers (including those fortunate enough to actually have the relevant documents) most often find themselves in positions of unstable, precarious employment. This entails working for unscrupulous employers without any labour or legal protections, unable to access benefits, toiling for long working hours, being physically and otherwise abused, becoming indebted and earning very low wages. Making matters worse for the majority is the general dysfunction and corruption of Home Affairs, which renders them "illegal" due to not having or being unable to access or renew the appropriate documents/permits. This reality, alongside the limited availability of up-to-date statistics, makes it difficult to fully determine the number of international migrant workers in the country, not to mention associated work demographics and location.

Nonetheless, what is crystal clear is that the wild claims of tens of millions of undocumented/"illegal" international migrants flooding South African society and in the process, taking large numbers of jobs away from South African citizens, are nothing but damn lies.

Casting an eye over the last decade or so, a 2016 study by the South African Migration Programme found that "despite speculation about the penetration of migrant entrepreneurs in the informal economy, only 20% of informal economy business owners had moved to Gauteng [the province with the most international migrants] from another country. This means that fully 80% of informal enterprises in Gauteng are South African-owned" (Peberdy, 2016). The study also stated that in respect of the entire workforce in Gauteng, 82% of the working population (i.e. 15-64 years old) were non-migrants, 14% were domestic migrants who had moved between provinces and just 4% could be classed as international migrants. Moving forward, a comprehensive study by the African Centre for Migration & Society (ACMS) – using figures from StatsSA – found that there are two million international migrants (i.e. those who are foreign-born) of working age (15-64) in South Africa (ACMS, 2020). This represents 5.3% of the entire labour force, most of whom are more likely to be informally employed.

More recently in late 2021, Statistician-General Risenga Maluleke (responding to the latest claims of xenophobes) had the following to say: "If one uses the output of foreign born

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> **… these lies are increasingly acting as the fire-lighters of intensifying conflict and violence…**

persons enumerated in Census 2011 and adds to it the net international migrants for the period 2011-2016 as well as the period 2016-2021 from the 2021 mid-year population estimates one would get an estimation of 3.95 million persons. This includes migrants of all types and is collated regardless of legal status [and age]" (StatsSA, 2021).

Besides blowing the generalised statistical lies of the xenophobes out of the water, all cumulative evidence gathered by professional/academic researchers over the last decade also destroys the equally specious arguments made by xenophobes that international migrants are a drain on the economy because they are not paying taxes and are abusing social/health services etc. The truth is that a majority of international migrant workers actually have made and continue to make, a positive economic contribution by providing jobs, paying rent, paying VAT and providing affordable and convenient goods (Peberdy, 2016).

It is hugely worrying that the bald telling of lies – whether here in South Africa or elsewhere – is fast becoming politically and socially mainstreamed. But it is beyond tragic that these lies are increasingly acting as the fire-lighters of intensifying conflict and violence, whether framed by xenophobia, gender, ethnicity, religion or sexuality. As history has taught us, the more often lies are repeated, the more likely it is that increasing numbers of people, will come to "believe" them and act accordingly. This is extremely dangerous.

Let us never forget what lies, repeated often and loudly, can incubate and feed.

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Racial capitalism

Understanding South Africa before, during and after apartheid

By Jeff Rudin

Jeff Rudin works at the Alternative Information & Development Centre (AIDC).

The term "racial capitalism" has its roots in South Africa's race-class debates, as articulated by Marxist revisionists and historians in the 1970s, and offers a widely accepted basis for understanding the emergence of apartheid capitalism (see Sam Ashman's article on "Racial capitalism and South Africa's changing race-class articulations" in New Agenda 84, 2022). But does it provide an analytical framework for post-apartheid South Africa? JEFF RUDIN argues that, while racial capitalism provides important insights into some of the dynamics of post-apartheid South Africa, it is racial capitalism standing on its head.

All capitalists everywhere face the same major conundrum: To maximise their profits, they are compelled to pay both the cheapest possible wages and maximise the reduction of all other costs of labour. Yet, the workers they must exploit are also people. With rare individual exceptions, we all come to have empathy as part of the defining characteristics of our species. Empathy means we spontaneously see ourselves – our feelings, fears, needs and dreams – in everyone else. Empathy lies behind our morals and ethical systems, no matter what they might be.

Despite all the current talk of diversity, we all have similar ideas of fairness, of justice, of how we expect others to treat us. Moreover, again allowing for a few individual exceptions, we accordingly all have the same need to think well of ourselves. A shared, universal humanity lies behind this empathy, notwithstanding all the different forms it takes.

Not surprisingly, therefore, there is a common solution to this conundrum of the exploited also being people: deny their humanity. This is where diversity truly blossoms. This denial takes innumerable forms. A different language or even accent; religion – with all its different gods and in all its different denominations; country – even region or province of the same country; gender; sexual orientation; football team … the list is endless. Race tops the list in South Africa. The fact that race is a biological nonsense makes not the slightest difference. Most of the people who readily accept that race is a social construction as readily forget this reality in their actual behaviour.

White Supremacy in South Africa was made easy for most of the supremacists until the late 1970s and early 1980s. They eagerly held on to the belief that they were superior, either by the good fortune of their race or the grace of their gods. Long before this period, however, colour-coding was so ingrained in everything they did, experienced and saw everywhere that the economic origins of the need to deny humanity to anyone not White had either been forgotten or never even understood: Being White gave them natural majesty over everyone. It was not only their own identity, but one affirmed by the Other, in the classical master-slave symbiosis of Hegel.

The horrifying power of White Supremacy rested in the complete reciprocity between the exploitation and the rationalisations, a harmony that made dehumanisation of Africans an untroubled part of Whiteness and the ensemble of privileges it guaranteed.

This is the organic unity between class and race arising from, in Marx's words, how "unpaid surplus-labour is pumped out of direct producers" (Capital, Vol. lll); a unity that is so perfectly captured by racial capitalism. The question is whether it still applies to today's South Africa? Where might Marx's recognition of the "infinite variations and gradations in appearance, which can be ascertained

> Most of the people who readily accept that race is a social construction as readily forget this reality in their actual behaviour.

only by analysis of the empirically given circumstances" lead?

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The colour confusions of the new South Africa

Racialised poverty and wealth is an analysis of post-1994 South Africa that unites most academics and commentators across the spectrum, both domestically and internationally. Official statistics are invoked to prove poverty's Black face. Official statistics are also said to prove that apartheid still lives with the unchanged White face of wealth and occupational privilege.

It is a commonplace for the reality of these glaring inequalities to be offered as proof of the unbroken continuation of "race" determining who one is, even in post-apartheid South Africa. The only problem here is the absence of any analysis demonstrating that South Africa's inequality is still racialised to any significant extent. Inequality per se is not automatically proof of racism.

What moves race from being a social construction to a material force that cannot be ignored? Whatever it is or however it is mediated, it must materially and substantially shape the lives of everyone deemed to be part of that particular social construction. This most definitely was the case prior to 1994. But what of now, of South Africa in 2022? The evidence need not be to the gold standard of the old South Africa, but it must at least go beyond just asserting the exiting of institutionalised racism.

An analysis based on White racism must, in the first instance, account for African poverty that goes substantially beyond the mere and undoubted fact of racism among some White people. I say "some" because it is only impressions, speculations and anecdotes that have flooded the space left empty by the absence of scientific research on the matter. More particularly, what would be required is a racialised explanation of how African poverty, bequeathed in 1994 by apartheid, has survived intact for 27 years under an African-controlled Parliament, an African-controlled government, and an African-controlled civil service. Moreover, it would have to take into account that it would be a survival within a legal system that has repealed all apartheid legislation and introduced a swath of statutes outlawing all forms of discrimination, except those explicitly designed to privilege Black South Africans.

Until this happens, there is a simple answer to the ensuing inequality, in the form of both poverty and wealth. Sociology, for all its limitations, makes clear how class societies everywhere and for all time naturally reproduce themselves. The children of privileged parents are made privileged just by virtue of the accident of their birth in exactly the same way as the children of poor parents are unavoidably impoverished by virtue of the accident of their birth. Equal opportunity is a modern myth invented by the rich to legitimate their richness and good fortune. The enduring privileges of most White South Africans is little more than a guaranteed outcome of the normal reproductions of class in the same way that inequality reproduced everywhere by capitalism gives poverty its specifically Black face in South Africa.

Yet, few South Africans are aware of these basic realities of Sociology 101. Racialised thinking, which is dominant in today's South Africa, gives further credence to the racialised appearances of inequality contained in official statistics. There was, however, a short period in the 1990s when race lost its normalised hegemony.

Using race to promote the class interests of the Black bourgeoisie necessitates the perpetuation of the perception of racial injustice personified in Whiteness.

The return of 'race' in post-apartheid South Africa

For most people worldwide, including South Africa, it is taken for granted that race has always been hegemonic in South Africa. Just suggesting that, initially, this was not the case in post-1994 South Africa is therefore a measure of how quickly the short history of the "new" South Africa has been forgotten.

South Africans of all "races" are now entirely comfortable with what were once the reviled apartheid categories: the inventions of African, Coloured, Indian and White, which ubiquitously populate all statistics having anything to do with demography, employment and equality. Report a car accident to the police and your apartheid-created race will become part of official statistics.

Yet, in the few years before 1994, the largest trade union federation, the Congress of South African Trade Unions (Cosatu) and its affiliated unions challenged the use of these apartheid categories. Although legally required to provide labour statistics in which all employees were listed according to these apartheid categories, Cosatu refused to comply. Saying that there was only one working class, Cosatu refused to provide this racist and divisive information.

South Africans have, additionally, quickly managed to forget the disquiet that initially made even the very word "race" too painful to use. "Demography" was among the most popular of the euphemisms. Similarly, non-racialism – a founding principle of South Africa's Constitution – was soon relegated to being only "aspirational". "Race" had to be reconstructed, albeit on well-prepared soil. Thabo Mbeki, our second president, was the principal architect. This role was unexpectedly forced on him by his objective of creating what he called the "Black bourgeoisie". Although he attempted to disown his one-time membership of the Central Committee of the South African Communist Party, he was comfortable using the term "bourgeoisie".[1]

Along with the freedom given for the first time to all South Africans in 1994, came the entirely new political power now exercised by African leaders who were acutely aware of having no commensurate economic power. The would-be capitalists of the new, non-racial South Africa faced the dilemma of how to become capitalists without capital. Using their political power, affirmative action, preferential state procurement and (so-called) Black Economic Empowerment (BEE) were soon enshrined in law. Corruption is the illegal bedfellow. Wealth began flowing into African hands, whether legally or not.

But there was an unexpected obstacle: how to reconcile this new wealth with their former revolutionary commitments to the Black majority who remained locked in their poverty.

Mbeki addressed this problem in 1999, when speaking about Black guilt. The wealth of the new Black elite created Black inequalities disquietingly reminiscent of the (still fresh in mind) racialised apartheid inequalities. This, he said:

> "frightens and embarrasses all those of us who are Black and might be part of the new rich. Accordingly, we walk as far and as fast as we can from the notion that the struggle against racism in our country must include the objective of creating a Black bourgeoisie".

Mbeki hastened to reassure his audience that these fears were unfounded. "We … [must] abandon our embarrassment about the possibility of the emergence of successful and therefore prosperous Black owners". Saying that "the deracialisation of … ownership" created the non-racial society prescribed by the Constitution and, moreover, that Black wealth was integral to the ANC's "central task" of "the defeat and elimination of racism", however, failed to strike the intended chord.[2] Championing race, to achieve non-racialism, didn't resonate sufficiently well.

Five years later, in November 2004, a leading member of the government and ANC, Smuts Ngonyama, tried a less tortured approach. Defending his involvement in a questionable BEE deal, he spoke plainly: "I didn't join the struggle to be poor."[3]

Unfortunately for him (and all the others), telling the truth merely made his words notorious. Acknowledging class self-interests was clearly not the way to go.

Mbeki's Black bourgeoisie had to wait until 2016 before "race", not class or non-racialism, again became a sure winner. Welcome to the battle cry of Black nationalists and supposedly left-wing alternatives to the Ramaphosa ANC: White Monopoly Capital (WMC) – Note: not capitalism but just the colour of the capital.[4]

Changing conditions made the racialised appeal immediate. It fed directly into the requirement for growing Blackness to have its competing identity, the necessary Other. With "race always being a relational construct" (Posel,

“ South Africans of all “races” are now entirely comfortable with what were once the reviled apartheid categories: the inventions of African, Coloured, Indian and White …

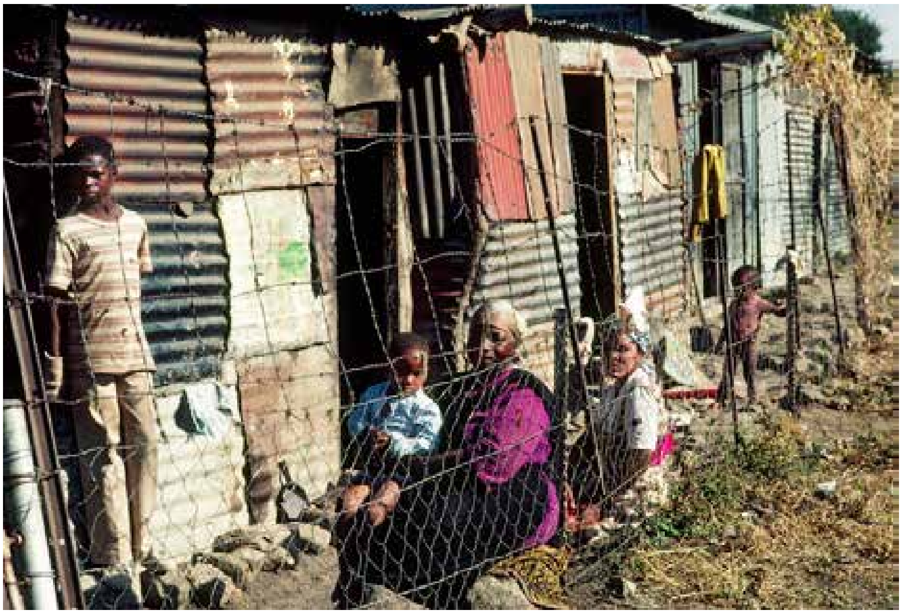

Photo credit: Flickr

2010) the meaning of Blackness both implies and depends on Whiteness (both capitalised here as elsewhere in this essay to denote their politically infused identities). Whiteness made redundant the need to explain the decidedly obscure term, WMC. Whiteness alone suffices to turn it into Enemy Number One; into White Supremacy; into the need for decolonisation. At a stroke, Whiteness meets all that is required of an instantly recognised and powerfully evocative Other.

Using race to promote the class interests of the Black bourgeoisie necessitates the perpetuation of the perception of racial injustice personified in Whiteness. The speed with which the word White has become a trigger, a bogey-man noun, a swear word, a word infused with menace, fear, envy, anger, has been little short of amazing. A small incident at a December 2021 conference organised by the organisation where I work captures this complex of meanings. The conference – on a range of contemporary issues, both local and global – brought together trade unions, progressive social movements and NGOs and individuals prominent in the anti-racist struggle. Participants had been given different colours to determine which commissions they would be in. To accommodate latecomers, a new colour had to be added: White. The announcement produced embarrassed laughter and jeers, along with an apology from the hapless person making the announcement.

Racial capitalism turned on its head

The success of President Mbeki’s policy of creating a Black bourgeoisie is not in doubt. Two points nonetheless merit mention. First, the majority of South Africa’s middle class is now African, with a large number being amongst the richest 10% of the population. Second, the fact of enormous wealth amongst some Africans makes intra-African inequality considerably greater than for any other group and is a significant factor in making South Africa amongst the most unequal societies in the world.[5] These facts are not widely spoken about.

Indeed, almost the only time mention of Black wealth and occupational success is guaranteed is when it is contrasted with White wealth and dominance of top private sector jobs. This is, to be sure, when the Black bourgeoisie invert the racism they keep alive. In this new racial capitalism, it is the erstwhile victims of racism who use the race card to attack the former beneficiaries of apartheid. Both the continuation of White wealth and Black poverty are then said to be caused by the Other, by the prevalence of Whiteness.

This inversion of racial capitalism is where the apartheid categories play such an essential role. Statistics about a generic Black face are not what is needed by the specifically African bourgeoisie. Most Africans have long insisted on a hierarchy of oppression. The hierarchy has never been developed beyond the fact of Africans being the most exploited since the first arrival in Cape Town of the Dutch in 1652. Still awaiting a proper analysis is why everyone else agrees with them. This agreement is reflected in the long history of the idea of oppression having been experienced by “Blacks in general, Africans in particular”. The South African Communist Party (SACP) accepts this as does Cosatu and its left-wing breakaway rival, the South African Federation of

The enduring privileges of most White South Africans is little more than a guaranteed outcome of the normal reproductions of class in the same way that inequality reproduced everywhere by capitalism gives poverty its specifically Black face in South Africa.

Trade Unions (Saftu).

African poverty in the ubiquitous racialisation of everything in today's South Africa is shamelessly used by the African bourgeoisie to prove either the continued existence of White Supremacy or the failure of 'transformation'. The African bourgeoisie – the various African beneficiaries of capitalism – cynically use capitalist-created poverty to promote their own capitalist-created wealth and privileges. Poverty's guaranteed African face thus puts White wealth permanently on the defensive. This will remain so until White wealth and other privileges shrink to the same ever-shrinking proportion of the population deemed to be White. It currently stands at 9.2%, from a high of 21%.

The short time during which the apartheid racial categories were not acceptable created a problem for the African bourgeoisie. The Employment Equity Act of 1998 refers to the separate categories African, Indian and Coloured only once and that is to reject them. The term deliberately used in the Act is "Black", defined as including all people apartheid defined as African, Coloured and Indian. Heated exchanges on the subject of retaining the apartheid categories took place during the parliamentary passage of the Employment Equity Bill. A number of political parties, including a number of MPs from the ANC itself, wanted to retain them and the hierarchy of victimhood they represented. The ANC, however, stood firm in its commitment to non-racialism and its principled rejection of the apartheid categories. I was the ANC's parliamentary researcher attached to the parliamentary committee that considered the Bill in all its detail and was witness to much of the discussion, particularly within the ANC.

The Employment Equity Act has been amended several times since 1998. Its latest amendments were approved only a few months ago. However, the definition of Black people remains exactly as it was in 1998. This is to say, there is still no statutory basis for using the apartheid categories. Self-interested pragmatism has been allowed to rule. Why draw attention to the unbroken use in all official statistics of the very apartheid categories rejected by Parliament? Why draw attention to the government's 21-year failure to enforce the Act passed by Parliament? Why draw attention to Parliament's 21-year failure to enforce its own Act? The government as well as MPs, being overwhelmingly African, are the main beneficiaries of the apartheid categories that have no basis in law. But the contemporary form of racial capitalism couldn't exist without these apartheid relics.[6]

So, racial capitalism does continue to play an important role in South Africa's political economy, albeit one now inverted from the original. There are now considerably more poor South Africans than ever before. That they remain Black is but a convenient opportunity for the Black rich to cry racism, as the battle cry of their own self-enrichment.

That they should do so is hardly surprising. What is surprising is that we, the Left, allow them to get away with it. Worse still is that those of us who endorse historical materialism popularise the now ahistorical term "racial capitalism", denoting exclusive White wealth at the expense of Black poverty.

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Dateline Africa

Reviewing the first quarter of 2022

In our last issue of New Agenda, Dateline Africa looked back on the news from Africa that emerged over the course of 2021, including some lesser known events as well as some good news, which rarely gets much global media exposure. Dateline Africa will now be published as a regular feature. This column covers the year up until the end of the journal's production cycle. We hope to provide a comprehensive report on our continent, one that departs from the usually one-sided (mostly negative) view of Africa generally projected in the media. And we invite you, our readers, to submit news and information to provide a positive, or at least more balanced, account. Send your news about Africa to production@ifaaza.org.

Sudan's Prime Minister Abdalla Hamdock

January

3rd – The Sudanese military took back total control of the government after the civilian prime minister, Abdalla Hamdok, resigned following protests over him previously signing a deal with the military.

4th – South Africa's Zondo Commission into State Capture published its first report: 1,438 people or companies were implicated in wrongdoing. [The last report was scheduled for release on 15 June].

14th – Three days of violence in a northern Burkino Faso town by fighters linked to Al-Qaida and Islamic State killed 30 people. The militants have engaged in cross-border attacks from Mali since 2015 over a swath of land where Burkino Faso, Niger and Mali meet.

15th – The Economic Community of West African states (Ecowas) imposed financial sanctions and closed their borders with Mali after the junta there postponed February elections to 2025.

22nd – Nigeria lifted a seven-month ban on Twitter (imposed after Twitter removed a tweet from President Muhammadu Buhari that incited violence).

28th – Tropical Storm Ana killed at least 88 people when it made landfall in Madagascar, Mozambique and Malawi.

29th – Burkina Faso was suspended from Ecowas following its coup on 23 January.

29th – The food crisis in Tigray resulting from the ongoing civil war in Ethiopia hit international headlines.

February

2nd – A coup attempt in Guinea-Bissau linked to drug trafficking in the country failed to kill the president and members of cabinet.

5th – Sudan was suspended from the African Union.

18th – The World Health Organisation announced a project that will give the technology to produce MRNA vaccines to six African countries – South Africa, Kenya, Nigeria, Senegal, Tunisia and Egypt.

20th – Ethiopia started generating power from its controversial dam on the Blue Nile, launching Africa's largest hydroelectric-power project.

Tigray rebel fighters in their re-captured capital city Mekele, Ethiopia

March

2nd – A total of 24 African UN members, including South Africa, abstained from voting on a General Assembly resolution deploring the Russian invasion of Ukraine. Another 22 African governments supported the resolution, which was passed. Some African representatives missed the vote. Eritrea was the only African country to vote against the resolution while BRICS was divided: Brazil voted to support the resolution, China, India and South Africa abstained and Russia voted against.

4th – What would have been the 90th birthday of the late Miriam Makeba, 'Mama Africa', was marked by the release of a new album by Rwandan/Ugandan vocalist and songwriter Somi, who said: "This album is my attempt to honour the unapologetic voice of an African woman who inevitably made room for my own journey and countless other African artists. In short, I owe her. We all do."

10th – Tanzanian President Samia Suluhu Hassan released a leading opposition member, Freeman Mbowe, from jail. Mbowe was incarcerated by the previous leader, the late John Magufuli, remembered as an authoritarian.

15th – Sixty people were killed in eastern Democratic Republic of Congo by Jihadists who claim allegiance to Islamic State. The rebels were said to be members of the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF), which originated in Uganda.

16th – Uganda's government continued its campaign against freedom of expression by arresting and torturing Ugandan author and activist Norman Tumuhimbise and a journalist colleague Farida Bikobere. They were accused of relaying "offensive communication … directed against the person of the President of Uganda".

25th – A mortar attack was launched on a UN and African Union peacekeeping mission in Mogadishu, the capital of Somalia. This follows an attack on 19 March on the same compound, which houses several Western diplomatic missions.

25th – King Mswati III delayed a Southern African Development Community (SADC) discussion of his promise to hold a "national dialogue" in Eswatini this year to address the 2021 violent protests against his autocratic rule. This follows an agreement he reached with Cyril Ramaphosa as the SADC special envoy. The proposed dialogue is being held up by the king's determination that this take the form of a *Sibaya*, which is a traditional Swazi policy and advisory council established in that country's constitution. However, many regard it as a traditional monologue by the king. »

Eswatini protests

25th – The Ethiopian government announced a "unilateral humanitarian ceasefire" in its ongoing campaign against Tigray rebels.

28th – Bandits in northern Nigeria attacked the Chinese-financed and built Kaduna to Abuja railway. The assailants derailed the train with explosives and then opened fire on the passengers, killing at least seven. Other passengers were abducted. This $874 million railway was the first of a number of standard gauge railways that Chinese contractors built in Nigeria. The General Secretary of the Trade Union Congress of Nigeria, Musa-Lawal Ozigi, was killed in the attack.

30th – Egypt was knocked out of the World Cup after being beaten on penalties by Senegal in Dakar. The Egyptian striker who lost the crucial shot was plagued by laser lights flashed at him by the crowd. Don't feel too sorry for him – this laser assault is apparently a common tactic used by Egyptian crowds against their visitors! Reigning African champions Senegal, with Ghana, Morocco, Cameroon and Tunisia, will represent the continent at the 2022 Fifa World Cup in Qatar later this year.

April

4th – The South African government lifted the State of Disaster that was introduced two years ago in terms of Covid restrictions. The official count of deaths from Covid-19 just topped 100,000 at the end of the first quarter of 2022. "Excess deaths" estimated by academics, however, were much higher, at about 300,000 between May 2020 and March 2022.

5th – The Zambian Ministry of Finance disclosed that President Hakainde Hichilema had served for the previous eight months without pay. Hichilema said a salary was not his motivation for seeking public office. Hichilema, 59, an economist and wealthy businessman, became president after 15 years in the opposition during which he was harassed and imprisoned. He unexpectedly defeated his corruption-tinged predecessor Edgar Lungu by more than a million votes.

6th – Burkina Faso's former president, Blaise Compaore, was sentenced *in absentia* to life imprisonment by a military tribunal. He was one of several accused found guilty of complicity in the 1987 murder of his predecessor, Thomas Sankara, (Africa's "Che Guevara") in a coup. Compaore fled to Cote'D'Ivoire after being ousted in 2014 and became a citizen of that country.

7th – The former president of South Africa, and former general-secretary of the ANC, Kgalema Motlanthe, said Russia's invasion of Ukraine must be condemned – a line at odds with that of the government, which insisted on remaining "neutral" and not condemning Russia.

11th – A weather system triggered devastating floods and landslides in KwaZulu-Natal, that destroyed roads, bridges and warehouses. Houses were washed away or damaged across a wide area and more than 430 people died.

KZN flood damage

23rd – More than 100 people, including children, died in a huge explosion at an illegal oil refinery in southern Nigeria. Ten percent of Nigeria's huge oil reserves is stolen by criminals who tap holes into pipelines of raw petroleum. Illegal refining is widespread in the country.

24th – Sudan's Darfur region was wracked by clashes between Muslim and non-Muslim groups. Approximately 168 people were killed in the renewed clashes. Another military coup in 2021 put paid to planned democratic elections in 2022.

23rd – The Equiano sub-sea cable landed in Nigeria. The cable will allow a five-fold increase in average Internet speeds in Nigeria and create many jobs. It is funded by Google as part of a planned $1bn investment in Africa up to 2026. Equiano starts in Portugal and will end in Cape Town, with branching units along the way to extend connectivity to more African countries. Its first landing in Africa was in Togo in March. The privately owned Portugal to Cape Town sub-sea cable was mooted in 2019. NA

Race, politics and mountain-climbing

The hidden history of mountaineering in Cape Town, from precolonial era to present

<u>*By Farieda Khan*</u>

Dr Khan is an independent researcher and sports historian who has published extensively on the impact of race- and gender-based inequality on the development of mountaineering in the Western Cape. She has a PhD from the University of Cape Town and is a consultant in social impact assessment. She gave a presentation on the 'hidden history' of mountain-climbing to one of IFAA's public and online Forums, which are held regularly at Surplus Radical Books in Woodstock.

The story of mountaineering in Cape Town is usually narrowly confined to the history of the formerly whites only Mountain Club of South Africa. However, this article shows that this story is far more comprehensive, complicated and diverse than the conventional view of history. FARIEDA KHAN goes beyond the mainstream into the hidden history of mountaineering at the tip of Africa.

Precolonial era to the age of exploration

Mountaineering as a sport is a relatively recent phenomenon in the history of modern South Africa, dating back to the mid-to-late 19th century when European alpinists visiting the Cape introduced local mountaineers to the emerging sport of rock climbing. However, mountaineering as a leisure activity, as opposed to a formal sport, is much older. It began during the era of European exploration from the late 15th century when European traders and sailors *en route* to the Dutch East Indies in South East Asia stopped at the Cape to take on water and barter for cattle. Many of those on board also took the opportunity to engage in some healthy exercise and recreation by walking to the summit of Table Mountain after months on end confined to a cramped ship.

However, mountaineering for survival is older still, dating back to the precolonial era, prior to Dutch settlement in 1652, when the native people of the Table Bay area, the Khoi, roamed the Table Mountain chain. They not only used the mountains for their encampments and to graze their cattle, but their intimate knowledge of the mountains and its flora enabled them to collect plants for traditional medicine and, most importantly, food.

Mountaineering during the colonial era

During the colonial era at the Cape (i.e. from 1652 to the eve of the establishment of the Union of South Africa in 1910), the relationship that the white elite had with the Table Mountain chain mainly took the form of recreation, such as carriage drives on the lower slopes, mountain walks and picnics on the summit. In addition, visiting scientists and botanists scoured the mountains in search of botanical and wildlife specimens.

During this period, it was the black underclasses (viz. servants and slaves) who had expert knowledge of the mountain as a result of their work on the mountain, fetching water, chopping and carrying wood, doing the laundry in icy mountain streams, acting as mountain guides and carrying food and picnic paraphernalia to the summit

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... the entry of the [coloured] CPMC into the field of mountaineering [was] a seismic shock for the [all-white] MCSA, leaving the club at a loss as to how to deal with black people who were not porters, cooks and labourers, but fellow mountaineers.

The Cape Province Mountain Club Founders 1931

Standing: W.Steyn, C.Fischer (leader), J.Kannemeyer, H.Flowers.
Sitting: C.Petersen (chairman), Mrs K.Petersen (treasurer), C.H.Townsend (secretary).

for the white elite, and also carrying the specimens collected by scientists and botanists. The mountains were therefore used by black people as a place of back-breaking work, and by the white elite as a place of recreation and scientific endeavour. The only exception to this racial divide in the use of the mountains was limited to the mountain walks and recreational activities undertaken by a small number of African pupils at Zonnebloem College in Walmer Estate (the children of African chiefs in the Eastern Cape) during the mid-to-late 19th century.

The development of mountaineering and rock-climbing as a formal sport began in the late 19th century, with the establishment of the Mountain Club of South Africa (MCSA) in 1891. The MCSA was firmly part of the establishment and attracted the cream of the social, professional and governing elite of the Cape – for example, Prime Minister Cecil John Rhodes and later in the 20th century Prime Minister Jan Smuts became members. While the club's constitution did not specifically bar black climbers from membership, the MCSA had an exclusively white membership; black people were not accepted as members given the growing social segregation based on race at the Cape. In fact, the only role for black people in the MCSA was a subservient one: as cooks, carriers and campsite cleaners.

Mountaineering during the first half of the 20th century

The history of mountaineering as a leisure activity among black communities in Cape Town in all likelihood dates back only to the early 20th century when the youth in areas with easy access to the Table Mountain chain began rambling and hiking on the mountain. These areas included District Six, as well as other parts of the Bo-Kaap all the way around the mountain chain to Simon's Town. By the beginning of the 1930s, the number of coloured mountain hikers and climbers on the Table Mountain chain had grown to such an extent as to cause comment at an MCSA meeting.

It was from the ranks of these mountaineers and hikers that the founders and early members of the Cape Province Mountain Club (CPMC) were drawn. The CPMC, which was established in mid-1931 by a group of enthusiastic climbers from District Six, drew its members mainly from the lower middle and working class. The club was able to obtain a hut on Table Mountain shortly after its formation. Regrettably, very little information on the club's early activities is available, due to the loss of the club's official documents. However, the club participated in mountain rescues, but only at an informal level as it was never invited to formally partner with the MCSA on rescues.

Most male members of the CPMC

saw service during WWII and during this period the February sisters, who lived in the Bo-Kaap and were the sisters of then club chairperson, Ronald February, kept the club going. The post-war years saw a lot of climbing activity and it was during this period that some of the most talented and self-taught members of the club, such as Charley Hankey, came to the fore. Many of these climbers opened new rock-climbing routes on Table Mountain.

The University of Cape Town Mountain and Ski Club (UCTMSC) was established on the campus of the University of Cape Town in 1933. Its membership profile was white and predominantly male, drawn from the educated, affluent middle and upper middle classes. The UCTMSC and the MCSA, having been established as exclusively white clubs, naturally only served the interests of the white elite during this period. Both clubs were able to leverage the privileged social and political position their members occupied in society to buy property for their club, amass equipment, and erect and maintain mountain huts. They also received special privileges and favours from the government, such as permission to access mountain areas that were off limits to the public.

It seems that the entry of the CPMC into the field of mountaineering represented something of a seismic shock for the MCSA, leaving the club at a loss as to how to deal with black people who were not porters, cooks and labourers, but fellow mountaineers. From the beginning, there was no equal or collegial relationship between the CPMC and the MCSA. Overtures from the CPMC were ignored and the MCSA did not invite the CPMC to any climbing meets or social events, or to participate in mountain rescues.

The MCSA's attitude to the CPMC was aloof and distant, despite the fact that the two clubs operated mere streets away from each other in central Cape Town. However, this was unsurprising given the unequal power relations which existed between blacks and whites in a society in which racial discrimination and segregation was becoming the norm. The practical consequence of the MCSA's attitude was that the talented climbers in the CPMC were deprived of opportunities to gain further rock-climbing expertise and to learn from their more experienced counterparts in the MCSA.

In contrast to this was the close, cordial and collaborative relationship between the MCSA and the UCTMSC, which happily shared access to their climbing meets, training courses and mountain huts.

Mountaineering during the early decades of apartheid, 1950s – 1960s

The leading climbers in the CPMC during this period included Neville Hendricks, Dick Knipe, Ishmet Allie and Sydney Alexander. Charlie Hankey remained the club's leading climber, opening routes on Table Mountain. Unusually for that period, and against the rules of the MCSA, Hankey had formed a climbing partnership with MCSA member, Barry Fletcher. The club's first expedition abroad, to Kilimanjaro in 1951, was undertaken by three of its members. There was also heavy involvement in mountain rescues during this period.

The District Six community was a nursery for young mountaineers through the Silvertree Boys' Club, under MCSA member David McAdam, and the various scout groups which used the mountain for their activities. However, the club's problems increased greatly during the apartheid era, as the newly-introduced Separate Amenities Act barred members from accommodation on hiking trails and in nature reserves. The worst obstacle the club faced, however, was the Group Areas Act, when District Six was declared an exclusively "white area" in 1966. Not only did this end the club's usual use of venues in the area, but it also put paid to its plans to establish a permanent club house in District Six and destroyed the organisations which acted as nurseries for recruitment. Most importantly, however, the club lost the advantage of proximity to Table Mountain as the community was dispersed to distant townships on the Cape Flats.

The Western Province Mountain Club (WPMC) was formed in 1967, with a membership drawn primarily from the Cape Flats. Many members had had their interest in mountaineering piqued by their experiences in the scouts or as a result of mountain hiking trips arranged by their high school teachers. Both the CPMC and the WPMC had been established as coloured clubs: the CPMC due to the ethnic sectarianism rife in the sporting sector among black communities during the first half of the 20th century while the WPMC was compelled by the local authorities to place a racially-exclusive clause in its constitution in order to receive a hut on Table Mountain.

The number of coloured leisure-seekers on Table Mountain spiked during this period, mainly as a result of an increase in the number of high schools; six new coloured high schools opened between 1946 and 1956. This added to the rise of a coloured middle class with leisure time to take an interest in outdoor recreation – an interest which was increased as high school teachers began taking their students on mountain hikes and climbs. The MCSA blamed the increasing coloured recreation users for the growing amount of litter on the mountain. As in the past, the MCSA sought to exploit the CPMC as a mechanism to address this problem. The increase in the number of black mountaineers also led to a number of "mixed" climbing partnerships being formed in defiance of MCSA policy, which required its members to resign if they persisted in doing so. ››

> **The mountains were used by black people as a place of back-breaking work, and by the white elite as a place of recreation and scientific endeavour.**

In the late 19thC, students at Zonnebloem College (the children of African Chiefs from the Eastern Cape), loved to hike on Table Mountain

The relationship among the mountain clubs

The relationship between the CPMC and the WPMC with the MCSA continued to be aloof. The two coloured clubs were mostly ignored and the MCSA seldom interacted with them. The MCSA did not deal with these clubs on a basis of equality and wholeheartedly accepted the apartheid status quo and the privileged position this gave its members in society. The club went further than this, forbidding its members from forming climbing partnerships with black mountaineers, which in itself was not required under apartheid legislation. This prohibition prevented the free exchange of expertise among all the clubs, making the development of mountaineering skill and the amassing of climbing experience by black mountaineers extremely difficult.

The MCSA and the UCTMSC continued their cordial and collaborative relationship, allowing reciprocal access to their mountain huts in the rural areas of the Western Cape and sharing invitations to climbing meets. It was only on the issue of membership that the two clubs differed. While the MCSA continued to pander to the racist views held by most of its members (which ensured that its membership remained exclusively white during this period), the UCTMSC reluctantly opened its membership to all in 1959. However, this only happened after a determined five-year campaign by Kenny Parker, a UCT student and CPMC member. While the opening of the club's membership to all students could be seen as a radical step at a time when an apartheid society was being constructed, this step did not result in black students joining the club and it remained predominantly (if not exclusively) white right up until the 1980s.

Mountaineering during the late apartheid period, 1970s – end of 1980s

This was a time of great political turbulence and upheaval as the apartheid regime responded violently to the challenges posed by a growing domestic anti-apartheid movement. Mountain clubs in Cape Town had to grapple with this rapidly changing social and political environment.

The CPMC and WPMC were both poorly-resourced, had no permanent club houses and continued to be badly impacted by apartheid legislation, which barred them from unrestricted access to mountains in rural areas since most of the accommodation on hiking trails and nature reserves in areas such as the Cederberg were off limits to them. There were several unpleasant encounters with white farmers when crossing private farmland to reach the mountains, including one occasion when CPMC members were threatened with a firearm! As the implementation of the Group Areas Act was ramped up during this period, this law continued to be a significant obstacle to the development of both clubs, since nearly all the coloured communities living in close proximity to the Table Mountain chain were forcibly removed to the distant Cape Flats, making it difficult, expensive and time-consuming to reach Table Mountain.

This period was also notable for the establishment of two non-racial mountain clubs in Cape Town, viz. the Bats Climbing Club (BCC) and the South African Climbers Club (SACC), which were both established as clubs for experienced climbers only. These two clubs did not last much beyond the 1970s. The BCC was established by MCSA member Dave Cheesmond, together with several other young mountaineers from the MCSA, the WPMC and the CPMC, including Ed February, who showed their dissatisfaction with the racist attitudes of the MCSA by forming their own club. The SACC was also primarily formed in opposition to what was perceived as the racism and non-inclusiveness of the mainstream mountaineering sector.

The MCSA continued to frown on their members partnering with black climbers and refused to share its facilities or open its membership and training courses to all. This meant that there continued to be no free transfer of skills among all mountaineers. Inevitably, this continued to retard the development of climbers in the CPMC and WPMC, and led to much frustration and resentment against the MCSA, especially among top climbers such as Ed February.

Neither the BCC nor the SACC seemed to have cordial relations with the MCSA, which was probably inevitable given the hostility that the MCSA still had to "mixed climbing" during the 1970s, and its eagerness not to offend the apartheid government. Where the two clubs differed was in the fact that the BCC had an informal club structure, while the SACC was a formal organisation, which received government funding for climbing expeditions at home and abroad. The reason that a non-racial club received such funding was in all likelihood related to the government's efforts to end its sports isolation internationally by trying to show that non-racial sport was flourishing at home.

Response of the mountaineering community, 1990-to-mid-1990s

This was a period of political transition, as South Africa began to steadily move towards democracy, which was eventually implemented in 1994 when the country's first democratic elections were held. These political changes were reflected in the response of the mountaineering sector.

The MCSA began discussions in 1991 on the possibility of the CPMC and the WPMC becoming sections of the MCSA. Ultimately, however, both the CPMC and WPMC opted to retain their independence, fearing the loss of their history and institutional identity. Underlying their decision were the still-fresh memories of racism displayed by the MCSA and the "dehumanising and humiliating experiences" recalled by some of their members. These discussions stirred up tension in the CPMC and WPMC as both clubs lost members, mainly from the ranks of experienced climbers who wanted access to the superior resources of the MCSA.

Late in 1992 the MCSA made a formal statement on its policy of non-discrimination, a requirement for any organisation which wished to compete in the international arena, and as a result the club was accepted into the mountaineering world body in 1992, officially becoming South Africa's premier mountaineering organisation.

There was closer interaction among the Cape Town-based mountain clubs during this period – for example, the first joint climbing meet by campus-based clubs, viz. the UCTMSC, the University of the Western Cape Mountaineering Club (UWCMC) and Stellenbosch University's *Berg en Toer Klub* (BTK) was held in April 1993. The UWCMC had been established more than a decade earlier but this was the first time that the UCTMSC and the BTK, which held annual climbing meets together, had invited the UWC-based club. The UCTMSC also launched an outreach programme for "underprivileged scholars" at high schools.

In 1993, the MCSA began considering how to address the "elitist label" with which it was often associated and decided to launch an "Outreach Committee" to expose young people in the townships to mountain wilderness areas and in this way nurture a new generation of members and leaders for the MCSA. At the end of 1994, which was the year that democracy was finally embraced by South Africa, the MCSA published a reflective editorial on its changing status as an NGO in a transforming society.

Despite the tensions which had been brought to the surface by the attempt to amalgamate the CPMC and WPMC with the powerful MCSA, in the main the 1990-1994 period was one of friendly and close interaction among all the Cape Town-based clubs as joint activities and social events were held and it seemed as though a solid foundation was being laid for a close and co-operative relationship for the future. At this point, the future for mountaineering in a democratic South Africa looked promising indeed: diverse, accessible and broadly participatory.

However, it was not to be, and currently relations among Cape Town-based mountain clubs remain fractured. As a result, the mountaineering sector has not been able to develop to its full potential in terms of diversity and broad-based climbing skill.

Conclusion

This article has presented a picture of Cape Town-based mountaineering history which unequivocally demonstrates the inextricability of sport and politics and highlights the fact that race and politics are central to an understanding of the skewed development of mountaineering – a legacy that the Cape continues to struggle with today.

By venturing beyond the history of mainstream mountain clubs and exploring the contribution and development of community-based and non-racial clubs, significant parts of the Cape's hidden mountaineering history have been uncovered. In so doing, this historical exploration hopes to contribute to the construction of a far more diverse, comprehensive and complex history of Cape mountaineering than the prevailing conventional view has thus far projected.

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What about our youth?

South Africa's youth and the scourge of unemployment

By Philippe Burger

Professor Burger is Pro Vice-Chancellor: Poverty, Inequality and Economic Development, Dean of the Faculty of Economic and Management Sciences and Professor of Economics at the University of the Free State. He was President of the Economic Society of South Africa and a member of the South African Statistics Council, which oversees the work of StatsSA.

Youth Month is a time to reflect on the quality of life of the young people of South Africa – how far they have come and how far they still have to go to achieve the goals their predecessors died for in 1976. PHILIPPE BURGER reminds us that the picture is gloomy, with massive unemployment predominantly a youth problem. He takes a measured look at the statistics.

That South Africa has an unemployment problem is not news to its citizens. It is something we see all around us. South Africa's youth, though, suffer the brunt of the unemployment problem. Millions of young people want to work, but cannot find jobs. Many also do not possess the skills needed in an economy that competes for international market share.

How serious is the overall unemployment problem?

According to StatsSA's Quarterly Labour Force Survey released in March 2022, the official overall unemployment rate in the fourth quarter of 2021 stood at 35.3%. That translates into 7.9 million unemployed workers. Compare that to the number of unemployed people in the United States, which in April 2022 stood at 5.7 million (South Africa's population is 60 million, while the US population is 330 million).

If we include discouraged workseekers, who are people who want to work but have given up looking for a job, the South African unemployment rate stood at an unprecedented 46.2%, or 12.5 million people. That means that almost half of all people who want to work, do not have a job.

How serious is the youth unemployment problem?

The situation, though, looks much worse for South Africa's youth. According to StatsSA, in the fourth quarter of 2021 the official unemployment rate for people between the ages of 15 and 24 was 66.5%, while for people between 25 and 34 it was 43.5%. This can be compared to 30% for those between ages 35 and 44, 22.8% for those 45 to 54 and 11.4% for those 55 to 64.

The broad definition was significantly worse, with the unemployment rate for people between the ages of 15 and 24 at 77%, while for people between 25 and 34 it stood at 54%.

Interpreting numbers with care

However, the 66.5% and 77% should be interpreted with care. It does not mean that two out of three or three out of four of *all* youths between the ages of 15 and 24 were unemployed. There are many 15 to 24-year-olds who might still be in school or university. They might not have a job, but because they do not seek or want a job they are not unemployed.

Thus, the 66.5% is calculated on only that fraction of 15 to 24-year-olds *who are in the labour market, either with a job, or wanting a job.* Only 22.7% of all 15 to 24-year-olds were according to the official definition in the labour market in the fourth quarter of 2022, and it is 66.5% of this 22.7% who are unemployed. This 66.5% of 22.7% translates into 15.1% of all 15 to 24-year-olds who are officially unemployed, and 7.6% who are employed.

Using the broad definition of unemployment, the unemployment rate for 15 to 24-year-olds is 77%. Using the same reasoning as with the official definition, the 77% translates into 25.5% of all 15 to 24-year-olds. The remaining youths aged 15 to 24 are not

Then and now

> **Altogether, 44.7% of all people between the ages of 15 and 34 were classified as not employed, in education or training.**

in the labour market. Though many of them are still at school or in training, this is unfortunately not the case for all of them.

Not employed, in education or training

There are also those who are *not employed, in education or training* (NEET). Some of them might be classified as unemployed according to either the official or broad definition of unemployment, while there might also be those who do not want a job. In other words, NEET includes the unemployed and the economically not-active who are also not in education or training.

According to StatsSA, 32.8%, or 3.4 million of the 10.2 million 15 to 24-year-olds were classified as NEET. A further 5.9 million of the 10.4 million 25 to 34-year-olds, or 56.5%, were also classified as NEET. Altogether, 44.7% of all people between the ages of 15 and 34 were classified as NEET.

Unemployment is largely a youth problem

Putting the youth unemployment problem in further perspective, 19.5% of the 7.9 million unemployed people in South Africa are between the ages of 15 and 24, while a further 39.7% are between the age of 25 and 34. Thus, in total 59.1% of all unemployed are youths according to the official definition, while the corresponding number for the broad definition is 59.4% (that is 7.4 million out a total of 12.5 million).

Negative or stagnant youth employment growth

A lack of economic growth is one reason for the massive unemployment numbers in South Africa. From 2010 to 2019, the South African economy grew on average at only 1.7% per year. With a one-to-one relationship between the economic growth rate and the rate at which the number of employed people grew, employment also on average grew at only 1.7% per year.

However, while total employment over the entire period increased by 17.5%, the number of 15 to 24-year-olds who are employed *fell* by 17.7%, while the employment of 25 to 34-year-olds increased by a mere 6.9%. The employment of all youth, i.e. 15 to 34-year-olds, increased by a mere 1.2% *over the entire decade*. Thus, not only is the overall growth in the number of employed people in the economy very low and linked to a very low economic growth rate, but the employment of the youth is either falling or at best stagnant.

The Covid crisis aggravated this situation. While total employment levels in the fourth quarter of 2021 was still 1.84 million lower than in the first quarter of 2020, 1.1 million of this drop were people between the ages of 15 and 34.

Poor education and the skills mismatch

Another reason for the stagnant or negative growth in youth employment numbers is the skills mismatch. As an economy, South Africa competes with other countries, many of which are up-and-coming fast-growing emerging market countries. South African exports compete with goods from these countries for market share in the international market. So too do South African domestic producers compete with imports from other countries.

Many of these countries have workers who are well trained and therefore able to improve productivity and therefore output. The skills mismatch is observable when ››

In total 59.1% of all unemployed are youths according to the official definition, while the corresponding number for the broad definition is 59.4%.

considering how the performance of South African learners compares with their peers in other countries. According to the 2019 Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS) and the 2016 Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS), South Africa's performance was quite dismal. For instance, South Africa was third from the bottom of 58 countries that participated in the mathematics and science grade 4 surveys. Morocco, Turkey, Kazakhstan and Chile did better than South Africa. And note that in South Africa it was grade 5 not grade 4 learners who participated. Regarding mathematics and science in Grade 8, South Africa came second last of the 58 participating countries and last out of 39 countries. And instead of grade 8 learners, South Africa participated with its grade 9 learners.

The importance of the quality of education should not be underestimated. Hanushek and Woessmann have shown, using data of a long list of countries including South Africa, that after controlling for the effect of other factors, the quality of education stands out as a determinant of the economic growth rates of countries. Thus, the better the quality of education, all else being equal, the higher a country's economic growth rate.

Conclusion

In the longer run, to improve the employability of its youth and increase the rate at which both the economy and employment grows, South Africa will need to improve the quality of its education. Though matric pass rates have increased, the overall quality of education still leaves a lot to be desired.

Education, though, is a long-run project with a long-run return. It will take many years before better educated youths enter the labour market. In the shorter run other impediments to economic growth will need to be removed to facilitate a faster economic growth rate. But it will also require policy to ensure that such higher growth is more inclusive of the youth.

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Re-reading the Communist Manifesto

What does it mean for us in the 21st century?

By Jeremy Cronin

Activist and author Jeremy Cronin is a long-standing member of the ANC and South African Communist Party. He was a Member of Parliament for 20 years, from 1999. He served in government as Deputy Minister of Transport and Deputy Minister of Public Works. He has published many articles and books as well as three volumes of poetry, the first one written while he was serving a seven-year prison sentence.

JEREMY CRONIN revisits the Communist Manifesto – he wrote the introduction to a new edition with Afrikaans and isiZulu translations that is being published by Jacana Media – to test its relevance to South Africa today. Never intended as a political blueprint, it nevertheless places our global crisis in the context of conflict and contestation predicted by Marx and Engels almost 200 years ago.

After the Bible and the Quran, the Communist Manifesto is the most widely published and translated text. Now, thanks to Jacana publishers, we have a new edition.

But is there anything to be learnt from (re)reading the Communist Manifesto in 2022? As we stumble from the 2008 Great Recession, into a global pandemic, and now a NATO-provoked, Putin-led aggression in Ukraine, all in the shadow of threatening environmental collapse – what, if anything, might we learn from the Manifesto?

A century and three-quarters after its first publication it certainly shouldn't be read as immutable gospel. Marx and Engels themselves frequently insisted on both the relative integrity of their youthful endeavour and its open-ended, work in progress character.

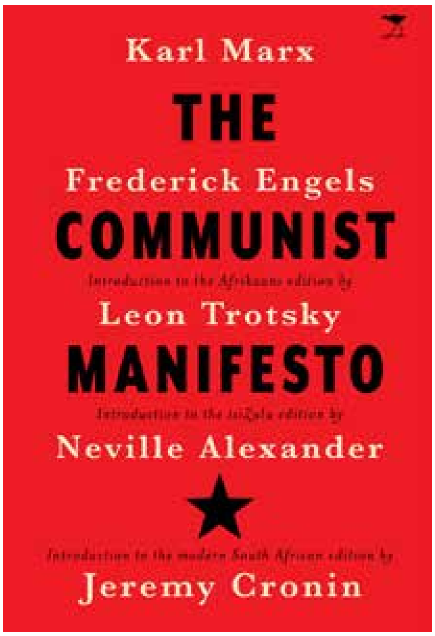
Especially resonant today is the Manifesto's brief but lucid unpacking of the crisis-prone nature of capitalism. These crises, Marx and Engels argue, with their "periodical return" are not caused by external shocks. They are driven by the internal logic of capitalist accumulation itself. "Modern bourgeois society … that has conjured up such gigantic means of production and exchange, is like the sorcerer, who is no longer able to control the powers of the nether world whom he has called up by his spells."

The only way in which these recurring crises can be overcome within a capitalist system is through the massive liquidation of productive capacity, with factory closures, bankruptcies, the destruction of jobs and livelihoods, "by the conquest of new markets, and by the more thorough exploitation of the old ones. That is to say, by paving the way for more extensive and more destructive crises, and by diminishing the means whereby crises are prevented."

Anyone reading the Manifesto for the first time expecting a crude bourgeois bashing is likely to be surprised. There are passages that salute the heroic dynamism of an emergent capitalist class. "The bourgeoisie, by the rapid improvement of all instruments of production, by the immensely facilitated means of communication, draws all, even the most barbarian, nations into civilisation."

In a prize-winning 1906 oration, the young Pixley ka Isaka Seme, future founder secretary-general of the ANC, echoed what on the face of it were similar views. "See the triumph of human genius today! Science »

Especially resonant today is the Manifesto's brief but lucid unpacking of the crisis-prone nature of capitalism.



has searched out the deep things of nature … spanned the sweeping rivers, tunnelled the longest mountain range – made the world a vast whispering gallery, and has brought foreign nations into one civilised family."

Seme felt this first wave of capitalist globalisation in the late 19th century had by-passed the African continent. He called for an African renaissance. Seme was not wrong to celebrate the progressive potential of late 19th century capitalist globalisation, with its steamships, the telegraph and continental railways. Nor was he wrong to urge Africans to rise to the challenges.

But, for Seme, this wave of globalisation was essentially benign, evolutionary, technical progress. Anomalies, like the continued marginalisation of Africa, were supposedly the result of oversight. This outlook produced a politics of Westernising modernisation at home and of deputations to persuade a Western audience that Africa was not inherently backward after all.

From the mid-1990s, Thabo Mbeki began explicitly to reprise Seme's lyrical vision of a new world. The 21st century would be "an African century". Our continent was on the threshold of a renaissance. Dazzled, perhaps, by the seeming global acclaim for our mythical "rainbow nation", and universal admiration for (and commodification of) Mandela the icon, there was a belief that soon abundant Marshall aid would pour into our country.

This meshed well with the emergent Third Way politics of former Western leaders Tony Blair, Bill Clinton and Gerhard Schroeder. It was the politics of a centre-left in the metropoles going rapidly rightwards, making its peace with a triumphant neo-liberalism. It declared we now lived in a post-communist, post-industrial, post-colonial world that had surpassed class struggle, in which, finally, we had the macro-economic tools to overcome capitalism's boom and bust cycles. It was the end of history.

We were to be positioned henceforth as a global go-between, representing the South to the North, and preaching to the South the good governance gospel according to the World Bank, IMF and Goldman Sachs.

Seme's early- and Mbeki's late-20th century visionary ambitions were each soon to be dashed, as Marx and Engels had in effect foretold in the Manifesto way back in 1848. A mere eight years after Seme's inspiring oration, the world was plunged into a gruesome, inter-imperialist conflict in the bloody trenches of World War 1.

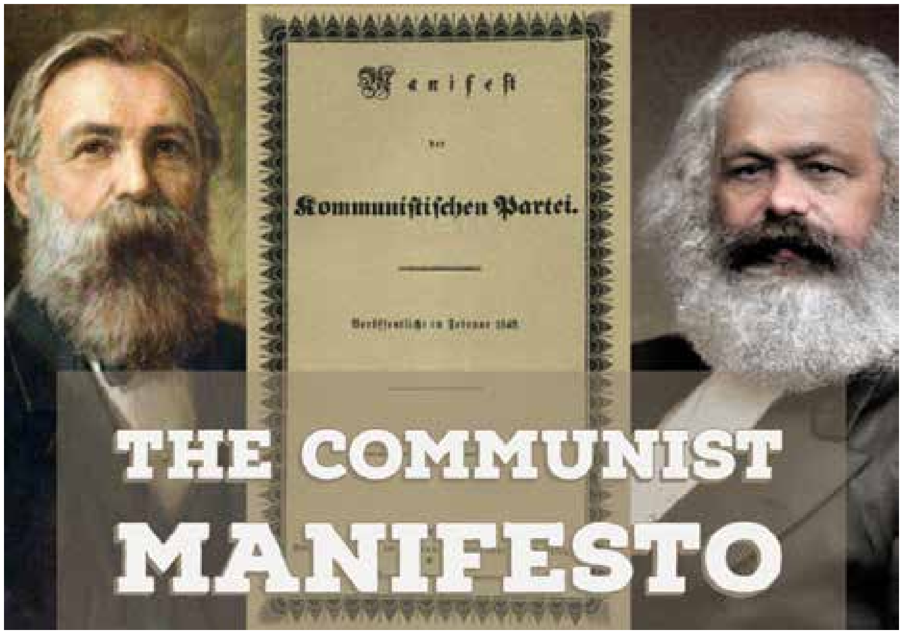
The early hopes of our 1994 democratic breakthrough have also largely been disappointed. Unsustainable levels of unemployment, persistent racialised inequality amidst islands of obscene wealth, a raging war against women's bodies, are testament to a society in deep distress.

Our problems have certainly been compounded by a vastly miscreant Zuma presidency and its kleptocratic networks – but these are symptoms as much as causes. To better understand our challenges and their deeper systemic character, it is instructive to return to the Manifesto and the seminal line of inquiry it opened up.

Here for the first time both the progressive and the crisis-prone, self-destructive nature of capitalism are explored. Contradiction and crisis are hard-wired into its DNA, and directly linked to the very dynamism so one-sidedly admired by Seme. In the Manifesto capitalism's crisis-prone nature is explained essentially as something that "in all earlier epochs, would have seemed an absurdity – the epidemic of overproduction". It is a system capable of hugely impressive, productive advances – but driven not by social need but private profit. What cannot be sold for a profit is worthless to capital, regardless of social needs. Productive capacity (including human labour) that is no longer profitable for the expanded reproduction of capital is cast aside.

The deepening inequality produced by capitalism exacerbates the problem of overproduction. When a tiny 1% controls the majority of wealth, a demand crisis strikes the market. In later work, notably *Capital,* Marx explores other dimensions of the capitalist crisis, including the tendency of a declining rate of profit. Under these conditions, surplus that could be invested in production is diverted into huge speculative bubbles ("financialisation") of the kind that underpinned the 2008 Great Recession.

> **For Marx and Engels politics is … an ever-enquiring science of the probable, and a passionate engagement with what is desirable.**



But if Seme and Mbeki got it wrong, can the same not also be said of the Manifesto's expectations of a proletarian revolution, however long-range those expectations were?

Capitalism, in contrast to what was once called "actually existing socialism", has certainly proved more tenacious than the Manifesto would sometimes seem to suggest. Part of this resilience lies in its ability to avoid crises of capitalism becoming terminal crises for capitalism, off-loading their impact onto the environment, onto workers and middle strata, onto the global South.

However, as the Manifesto asserts, each of these recuperative manoeuvres is "paving the way for more extensive and more destructive crises, … diminishing the means whereby crises are prevented." In particular, the ongoing capitalist destruction of environmental sustainability, the very condition for human civilisation, raises the most urgent question of our times.

In the Manifesto there is a sobering reminder that victory is not certain. In the long history of class struggles, the clash of oppressor and oppressed might end "in a revolutionary re-constitution of society at large". But it might end "in the common ruin of the contending classes." As we hurtle towards irreversible planetary destruction, which is it to be? And if it is to be the former, a revolutionary re-set "of society at large", how are we to get there?

In the second and concluding sections of the Manifesto politics enter the discussion – strategy and tactics; immediate aims and longer-term objectives; concrete analysis; political organisation; alliances; popular mobilisation. This is the terrain of practice. Here history is not on auto-pilot, but nor is it open-ended – there are predictable tendencies, but nothing is predetermined.

It would be wrong to read the Manifesto in search of some cut-and-paste, political blue-print for the present, a utopian model ready to be rolled out. The Manifesto is explicitly critical of any such utopian models. But there are intriguing practical political lessons for our times. Given a long history of left politics too often riven with factional skirmishes, the Manifesto insists that communists "do not set up any sectarian principles of their own, by which to shape and mould the proletarian movement."

Touching presciently on other inherent negative tendencies in Left politics, the Manifesto argues neither for mere populist short-termism, nor for an all-or-nothing, abstentionist disdain for the daily struggles of working people. "The Communists fight for the attainment of the immediate aims, for the enforcement of the momentary interests of the working class; but in the movement of the present, they also represent and take care of the future of the movement."

For Marx and Engels politics is not just "the art of the possible". It is also an ever-enquiring science of the probable, and a passionate engagement with what is desirable – a world in which, finally, "the free development of each is the condition for the free development of all." NA

Healthcare workers at risk

in a society that does not value the work of caring

By Nina Benjamin

Nina Benjamin is the Gender Program Coordinator for the Labour Research Service (LRS). She has worked at the LRS since 2007 coordinating its work in building cultures of gender equality in trade unions, the workplace and the community.

NINA BENJAMIN reflects on the lessons of a three-year pilot social action initiative to reduce violence in a health institution in Gauteng. Using a multi-stakeholder approach, the initiative experimented with individual and collective actions for reducing violence and changing perceptions about the value of care work and healthcare workers.

Healthcare workers are being *ordered* to care – in a society that does not value the work of caring! What we are seeing is a contradiction, where healthcare is portrayed as moral work, a gift to society, while the reality is that healthcare work is exploited social reproduction (Goodman, 2016).

In South Africa, authors like Hlatshwayo (2018) have shown how community healthcare workers are recruited to act as a stopgap measure to deal with the chronic underfunding crises in the health system. Falling public investment in the health system results in work reorganisation that includes the recruitment of workers, such as community healthcare workers who receive stipends or minimum wages and work long hours under poor working conditions. They face increased pressure on working time arrangements and generally experience an intensification in the devaluing of their paid reproductive work; this is the exploitation of social reproduction.

With the increasing privatisation of the healthcare system comes a commodification of care. Its qualitative and emotional nature is treated as invisible, abundant (Goodman, 2016), and not worthy of fair remuneration because it is women's work – work that is merely a public extension of the unpaid care work done in the home.

As more workers are drawn into this commodified and increasingly precarious form of work in the health system, violence, in all its forms, is exacerbated.

A trade union challenge

At the end of 2014, the Health & Other Services Personnel Trade Union of South Africa (Hospersa) approached the LRS for support. The union wanted strategies for responding to the rising levels of violence against their members in health institutions. They were concerned not only for the safety of their members, but also for the ability of their members to provide quality services under stressful and at times traumatic conditions. In November 2014, representatives from 11 health institutions across four provinces met with the LRS to share their experiences of violence in their workplaces. Worker leaders spoke of feeling ''terrorised'' by communities angered by the lack of health services and what they perceived as the lack of care on the part of the healthcare workers.

Baby Ntoula, a nurse clinician and Hospersa shop steward at Meadowlands Clinic in Soweto, Gauteng, reflected back on the levels of violence in the clinic in 2014 at the time of the initial meeting between LRS and the union.

> These people from the Meadowlands Community used to terrorise us. From the time they come into the gate they start singing songs because they said our services were so poor and that we don't care for them. [They said] we take our time, we go for lunch for three hours and leave them unattended. When we come in they will be singing, you could not get a glass of water because the minute you leave your station they start singing. They said "we are going to burn the clinic down with your guys inside". We did not take this lying down because if they say you are going to be burnt in the

... healthcare is portrayed as a gift to society, while the reality is that healthcare work is exploited social reproduction.

Photo credit: Flickr

> clinic and you know that they have done it somewhere else, it is serious. (Health Care System Stakeholders, 2017)

Stories of workers fearful of having their tyres slashed or of being attacked when they left the clinic during lunch hour left a very sombre mood in the meeting. Reports of threats by community members who claimed that they would burn down institutions with the staff inside were indicative of a very grave situation that left healthcare workers traumatised.

Out of this meeting a partnership was forged between the LRS and Hospersa with an agreement that a pilot social action initiative would be launched at one of the institutions represented at the meeting, the Meadowlands Clinic. The aim of the pilot was to deepen the unions' understanding of the causes of the violence and to experiment with different actions to reduce the level of violence in one institution. The knowledge gained would be shared across the union.

The focus was on experimenting with different activities to find out which could help to give value to the essential nature of care work and to the people involved in carrying out this work in the health system. From the start of the initiative it was clear that there was no ''quick fix'' solution or any single strategy to address the rising violence. Interventions would need to take place on many levels including in the policy and advocacy spheres.

From our initial discussions it was clear that unequal gender power relations were fuelling the violence, and it would need more than policy changes and demands for improved infrastructure and working conditions. As long as care continues to be seen as undervalued "women's work" by institutions and individuals, the propensity for using violence to maintain relations of domination over those carrying out the care work will remain in place. The stakeholders involved in the Meadowlands initiative were more adept at intervening in the policy and advocacy spheres, but less so in processes focused on changing individual behaviour and social norms.

The Meadowlands Clinic pilot social action initiative started at the beginning of 2015 and continued until mid-2017. Meadowlands Zone 2 Clinic is a primary healthcare facility in Soweto. The clinic is part of Region D within the city of Johannesburg and offers services in immunisation, family planning, communicable diseases, health education and chronic illnesses.

The different stakeholder groups included shop stewards from Hospersa and three other trade unions represented in the clinic, the Democratic Nursing Organisation of South Africa (Denosa), the National Education, Health and Allied Workers Union (Nehawu) and the Public Servants Association of South Africa (PSA). Also part of the initiative were representatives from the Meadowlands Clinic Health Committee, the District Health Forum, the local community policing forum, local church organisations, as well as local non-governmental and community organisations. Department of Health officials participated in some of the stakeholder engagement processes.

An international phenomenon

Protecting our frontline healthcare workers was a rallying cry from the start of the Covid-19 pandemic at the beginning of 2020, yet healthcare workers all over the world report experiencing high levels of verbal, sexual, psychological and physical violence in the workplace. The World Medical Association has recently described violence against health personnel as "an international emergency that undermines the very foundations of health systems and impacts critically on patients' health" (Vento *et al.*, 2020).

A systematic review (Njaka, 2020) published online identifies workplace violence against healthcare workers as a worldwide public health challenge, with South Africa having the highest prevalence of healthcare institutional workplace violence on the African continent. The report concludes that while a high prevalence of workplace violence against healthcare workers exists in Africa, there is very little research available to inform policy formulation to address the negative impact workplace violence has on the healthcare system. Poor reporting of incidents of violence, particularly by nurses, creates further challenges in addressing the problem.

An ILO Working Paper, *Gender-based Violence in the World of Work* (Kruz and Clinger, 2011), reports that even though healthcare workers are eight times more likely to have experienced the threat of violence than those in the manufacturing sector, close to 70% of incidents among nurses are not reported.

Challenging perception of the 'uncaring healthcare worker'

The initiative in the Meadowlands Clinic worked from the understanding that healthcare workers, who are predominantly women with many working in the communities in which they live, need to create alliances and foster relations and support from the communities they serve to reduce the levels of violence in the clinic. This would also assist their response to the impact of the state's restructuring and privatisation of the health system on the levels of service provision and working conditions. The LRS and Hospersa understood that by remaining silent and internalising the pain and trauma of the daily experience of community anger and violence, resentment and anger would increase and the gulf between workers and the community would deepen. Trade unions protecting their members needed to take into account the volatile workplace situation their members experience. Hospersa recognised that limiting their response to marches and strikes for improved conditions could deepen the gulf between healthcare workers and the community, which is desperate for improved health services and likely to direct their anger and frustration against the healthcare workers.

A public perception has emerged that the healthcare worker and more particularly the nurse is cruel, uncaring and deserves to be punished if patients' needs are not met. This sentiment on the part of the public has at times been fuelled by the Department of Health; former Health Minister Dr Aaron Motsoaledi released a statement on International Nurses Day in May 2016 describing nurses in public health institutions as "devils in white" (*Pretoria News,* 2016). The perception of the uncaring healthcare worker is so pervasive that initially even the role players in the Meadowlands Clinic initiative, excepting the trade union representatives, argued that nurses had only themselves to blame for the violence they were experiencing.

Challenging and shifting the negative perceptions patients and community members had of healthcare workers and, in turn, the fear and anger healthcare workers felt towards patients and community members, was essential for building any kind of solidarity among the stakeholder groups in the Meadowlands Clinic initiative.

A core group of stakeholder representatives from the four trade unions, the Clinic Health Committee, the District Health Forum, a church group and three community organisations was formed at the start of the initiative in 2015. They met regularly to share their diverse experiences and strategies for addressing the violence in the clinic. The group acted as a vehicle for building solidarity and community. Through extensive group discussion on what ''being cared for'' and "taking care of others'' meant to each one of them, they reflected on the dissonance they experienced between recognising care work as systemically and individually devalued, while simultaneously recognising it as the key element in ''life making''.

The group became an incubator for experiments to create an identity as a community of stakeholders with a shared intention i.e. reducing the violence in the clinic. The incubation process was carefully facilitated and continued over many sessions during the three years of the initiative. Unlike a traditional workshop process, the initiative was less about internalising knowledge about violence, gender relations and social reproduction, and more a process of building a group identity within a sustained community of practice and extensive social negotiation (Carr *et al.*, 1998).

As an incubator for testing ways of creating solidarity, the core group of stakeholders was well placed to facilitate broader dialogues that brought together healthcare workers, patients, civil society organisations and government officials. The dialogues often resulted in heated discussions.

> **With the increasing privatisation of the healthcare system comes a commodification of care [which is] treated as invisible, abundant and not worthy of fair remuneration.**

Each of the stakeholders had a particular perspective on the causes of the violence and how to respond to it. While they all had an interest and stake in the process, not all of them had equal status in the eyes of the stakeholder groups. The Department of Health officials, for example, brought their formal power and authority into the dialogical spaces, but were not treated as the experts. It was the stories, the subjugated knowledge of the healthcare workers, patients and community members, which gave them "epistemic advantage" (Harding, 2004) and they were able to create a praxis to respond to the violence in the clinic. In feminist theory epistemic advantage is the advantage that women and other marginalised groups have in understanding the power relations in their own context.

In the dialogical spaces stories of violence were shared and discussed. Through the conversations the actual people caught up in the violence, the ''uncaring healthcare worker'' and ''angry patient'', had a name and a face. Through questions in the discussions, participants were encouraged to make sense of why they were experiencing the healthcare worker as uncaring or the patient as angry. Here we were drawing on Freire's (2005) basic concept of problem posing.

For the stakeholders working directly with the community, such as the Clinic Health Committee or the church groups, the dialogues raised the importance of care work both in the private and public spheres and the responsibility they have to work with healthcare workers to challenge the state's devaluing of public healthcare. This opened the space for participants to explore how violence is used to maintain unequal gender relations that define care work as ''women's unpaid responsibility''. Clinic patients who participated in the dialogues were challenged to think differently about the challenges healthcare workers face and about their own impatient and often violent responses to workers who are being forced to care in a system that places very little value on the work of caregiving.

Individual and collective responses to the violence

The stakeholders involved in the initiative experimented with a range of activities they believed would demonstrate the value of the healthcare workers' work. The idea was to help healthcare workers to become more confident and assertive about the important role they play in the wellbeing of society, as well as to strengthen relationships of solidarity between community members and workers.

The initiative used multiple actions to respond to the violence. For example they took collective responsibility for improving the physical infrastructure of the clinic, creating safe spaces where people could talk about their experience of the violence, strengthening internal and external channels of communication, initiating patient wellness groups, and later reflecting on the impact of these actions on both patient and staff morale and relationships. Through this process individual and collective standpoints began to emerge about the kind of individual as well as systemic changes needed to reduce the levels of violence in the clinic. The move towards creating ''standpoints'' on the violence in the health sector was what Harding (2012) calls becoming ''knowing subjects'' who in this way gained more control over their lives.

Working with a feminist pedagogy

From the start of the social action initiative we recognised that there was no ''quick fix'' solution for the violence in the clinic. While more direct policy addressing violence in the health sector and improved resources would be important, challenging the gendered division of labour and systemic devaluing of care work would need patient and persistent work to dismantle the patriarchal norms and practices deeply embedded in the health system.

The Meadowlands initiative started at a moment of deep crisis for the stakeholders, but they were able to turn this into an interactional moment, a moment of learning. Alison Jagger (cited in Hesse-Biber, S. 2012) argues that emotion is a central aspect of knowledge-building. Anger, frustration and fear were very dominant emotions in the early engagements with the Meadowlands stakeholder community and it was therefore important to create a space where dialogue was encouraged, where stakeholder groups felt ''safe'' and where the emotional and psychological impact of the violence was acknowledged.

Singleton's (2015) "Head, Heart and Hands" model for transformative learning supported the social action initiative of working holistically and foregrounding what is usually ignored in activist spaces, i.e. the affective domain. It requires work that goes beyond the transformation of individuals to focus on working ''holistically'' with the entire healthcare ecosystem as it presented itself in the clinic. The ''whole community'' approach was adopted as it was recognised that the propensity for violence was embedded in the consciousness, norms, culture, behaviour and institutional practices and policies of all the role players.

Challenges

At the start of the social action initiative our assumption as the LRS was that healthcare workers at the clinic would welcome the initiative as it held the promise of reducing the high levels of violence in the clinic. What was not anticipated was the high levels of fear and victimhood. Care workers feared being physically attacked by members of the community but also had a sense of being the victims of different forms of emotional and psychological abuse by patients and the Department of Health. Establishing ongoing staff involvement in the initiative was a struggle as staff members reported high levels of fear and trauma that impacted on their ability to respond to challenging situations. What union leaders initially described as ''apathy'' on the part of workers proved to be a much more complex mix of fear, anger, disillusionment and a perception of being undervalued.

Sharing methodological insights

The Meadowlands initiative helped us see how the violence in the health system is a result of a complex mix of structural inequalities and hidden webs of individual and institutional patriarchal relations and norms that keep the gendered division of labour in place.

Over the three years of the pilot social action initiative, stakeholder groups explored the lived reality of gender-based violence in the health system. They explored their individual experience of this violence, reflected on their experiences in collective spaces and, as the webs of their individual and collective situated knowledges coalesced, they developed standpoints (Harding, 2012). Donna Haraway's (n.d.) concept of situated knowledge recognises how the production of knowledge is situated in political and gendered contexts.

For those participating in the clinic initiative the analysis of violence was from the inside out. Their starting point was their personal lived experience of the violence. This meant shifting from speaking only with the voice of a stakeholder representative to being able to feel safe enough to share their own thinking, feelings and actions with others. Cognisant of the unequal gender power relations and positional power relations between stakeholder groups, guiding the process meant being able to work with discomfort and for this discomfort to become part of the learning process (Hooks, 2015).

Conclusion

The notion of ''life giving'' captures the intention of the social action initiative. The coronavirus pandemic that started in 2020 brought into sharp focus the important role that all forms of reproductive work plays in keeping society alive and it was during the pandemic that we saw healthcare workers being lauded for their ''life giving'' work. The Meadowlands initiative was an example of concerned individuals and groups experimenting with actions that would do what we saw during the pandemic, give value to the ''life giving'' work of healthcare workers. This strategy is significant in that it was used to reduce the violence in the clinic by drawing a direct relationship between the devaluing of the reproductive work of healthcare workers and the rising levels of gender-based violence in the health system.

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Anglogold Ashanti

Comparative study of human and environmental rights in three African countries

By Rachael Nyirongo

Rachael is a legal researcher currently working as a Research Services Manager at the Institute for African Alternatives (IFAA). She assisted in the research of the project this article is based on. She has also done work in the peace and security field and carried out research on African migration. She has a Bachelor of Laws (LLB) and a Master of Laws (LLM) in Human Rights Law and is currently completing an LLM in International Law.

This is a summary of a research project undertaken by the Institute for African Alternatives (IFAA) with the assistance of HakiMadini Tanzania and the Centre for Social Impact Studies (CeSIS) in Ghana. The research set out to establish the extent to which AngloGold Ashanti (AGA), a major goldmining company, complied with the human rights and environmental laws within South Africa, Ghana and Tanzania during the 10 years between 2008 and 2018. Read the full research report on IFAA's website

Introduction

The question we pose in this study is: Can mining be a catalyst for the realisation of human rights within the context of climate change and the increasing recognition of the need for a clean, safe environment for communities to flourish?

This study considers the operations of AGA in Tanzania, Ghana and South Africa between 2008 and 2018. It is important to note that AGA has a different track record in each of the three countries. By focusing on the question of whether human rights and the environment are being respected and protected, we attempt to understand the multi-faceted nature of mining's role in development. The purpose of the research was also to find gaps in the existing accountability mechanisms with the aim of raising the need for states and regional bodies to consider better accountability frameworks if necessary to protect the communities impacted.

AngloGold Ashanti

It is also important to note that after more than 100 years of mining in South Africa, AGA sold up its assets and no longer operates in the country. The company sold its last mine in South Africa in 2020. This came amid a general exodus of gold mining companies from South Africa. The move was not positively received by the communities affected, who raised concerns about AGA's lack of communication, specifically about its plans to move, and the negative impact this had on the mining communities affected. As this study covers a period up to 2018 this does not affect the research findings; respondents were asked about their interaction with AGA during the 10 years the study covers.

International human rights and environmental rights mechanisms

International laws[1] have been enacted to protect human rights and the environment, but many of these laws have not been domesticated. Although they are progressive and constructive, communities generally struggle to access the implementation and accountability mechanisms and frameworks that hold these corporations accountable.

Furthermore, although these international laws cover a range of basic and social rights, they usually place responsibility for upholding them on the state, rather than corporations. Civil society organisations (CSOs) and activists have taken a critical look at ››

Can mining be a catalyst for the realisation of human rights within the context of climate change?

the role of corporations in adhering to these rights and have demanded that human rights standards be specifically applied to them as well. As a result, the United Nations Human Rights Council developed and endorsed the "Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights: Implementing the United Nations 'Protect, Respect and Remedy' Framework." The Business Human Rights group website declares this "provides a universally recognised, people-centred approach to companies' social and environmental impacts" (Business and Human Rights Resource Centre, n.d.).

Advocacy for the human rights-based approach to environmental protection is growing and has multiple facets. Brei (2013) identifies three different positions that rights-based duties and obligations regarding nature and the environment stem from: the human right to a healthy environment, the rights of nature and the environment's constituents (its fauna and flora); and the human right to health. The research report shows how these three elements are interlinked.

Accountability mechanisms considered in the study

The research considered some of the current accountability mechanisms and how effective they are. It focused on the right to free, prior and informed consent (FPIC) for indigenous people, a principle that has been recognised under international law.[2] It requires that indigenous persons be informed of the impacts any planned project may have on their resources, land and rights in a timely manner without coercion or manipulation and be afforded the opportunity to accept or reject a project before commencement (Oxfam *et al.*, 2018).

However, while on paper communities seem to have accessible remedies available, in practice they are often at a great disadvantage and are unable to hold corporations to account. A framework may be in place for corporations to report the impact of their activities and how they plan to address any negative impacts or any other concerns, but this cannot be legally enforced and gives too much leverage to the corporations to not only give a representation of the most favourable reports but also evade accountability where they do not live up to standards.

In a response to this concern, during a Human Rights Council (HRC) assessment of transnational corporations in September 2013, member states proposed that there be a legally binding instrument to hold these corporations to account for human rights and environmental abuses (Kassa & Nyirongo, 2022). The HRC established the Open-Ended Intergovernmental Working Group (OEIGWG), which was tasked with drafting a Binding Treaty. It has held six sessions so far, but CSOs have expressed concerns about the draft treaties not prioritising human rights over trade and investment interests (Global Campaign, 2020).

AGA compliance with accountability mechanisms

AGA has been very clear about its commitment to prioritising human and environmental rights and has declared multiple times on public platforms that it intends to comply with the relevant international and national policies and frameworks.

The company has developed an internal framework composed of a Human Rights Policy and a Human Rights Due Diligence Standard and Guideline. However, its responsibility is narrowly interpreted as the responsibility to "do no harm", which can be interpreted in ways that allow it to escape responsibility for certain actions.

AGA's guidelines are regulated internally and there are limits to how they can be applied. For instance, accountability processes determining the human rights baselines to implementing the remedies are internal and overseen by the manager in control of the site, which could present a conflict of interest.

Findings summary

The research conducted by IFAA and its partners assessed how compliant AGA was in meeting international and national standards and its own declared commitments. It looked at environmental abuse and how that impacts human rights in communities associated with AGA in the three countries. It also looked directly at human rights experienced in these communities, including the rights of artisanal miners.

Environmental abuses impacting human rights

a. Acid mine drainage

Acid mine drainage was a concern brought up by all the communities and informants interviewed. In Ghana, community members said no one drinks water from taps or streams. All the streams in the areas surveyed are polluted and the tap water has a high concentration of heavy metals rendering it undrinkable. All the respondents indicated that they purchase sachet water instead, which pushes up the cost of living for the already impoverished communities. Other sources of water provided by AGA, such as the boreholes in Tebrebie, are also not usable, according to the community members interviewed.

The Tanzanian community of Nyamalembo reported that their water sources have been affected by AGA mining operations. This was confirmed by an inspection by the Tanzanian Mining Commission, which declared that the water is not safe for human consumption and alternative water sources will have to be secured. In addition, when the company leaves the unused residual exposed to the environment, rainwater carries it off, affecting other parts of the ecosystem. The community also reported that there have been some leakages from the chemical waste dam, exposing acid to the environment.

In the South African town of Stilfontein, the Margaret Village community has been suffering for a long time from acid mine drainage into the tap water and tests carried out by the Municipal Health Manager proved the water was contaminated with high sulphate content (present in acid mine drainage) and coliforms (normally found in faeces).

b. Dust and noise pollution

There are widespread complaints about dust and noise pollution from mining activities in Ghana, especially in Taberebe and Anwiam. AGA is still carrying out open cast mining in the Tebreibe communities and dust from the blasting activities poses a danger to the health and safety of residents. Moreover, the company vehicles drive above the speed limit on the untarred roads and raise even more dust.

In Tanzania, the communities reported that they have been disturbed by noise and dust pollution at unexpected times. In the past, they were informed in advance of the scheduled blasts.

In South Africa, there have been reports of dust from tailings containing toxins such as silica, arsenic and uranium. An expert shared information from a scientist who found high levels of metals in the hair and fur of the people and their animals. The community members also complained that AGA operates its trucks at night without informing them in advance, which causes high levels of pollution.

Human rights abuses

a. Limited community engagement

In Ghana, the community acknowledged that AGA's communication with the local community is an improvement on its predecessor in that country, Ashanti Goldfields Company (AGC).[3] However, this was not the case in the other two countries.

In Tanzania, the community reported that there is limited engagement between the community village governments and AGA. The company mostly engages with the district leaders who, recipients said, are generally not aware of the challenges facing the community. The community members complain that the local government, which has not been much help to them, appears to be in partnership with AGA. This prevents AGA from addressing the needs of the community.

In South Africa, the community said AGA had not communicated with them when the company was still in operation and that AGA left without informing the community they were selling the mine to Harmony. A community member said AGA also used to attempt to bypass formal procedures to obtain community consent, for example by rescheduling meetings at the last minute, which prevented the community from calling in CSOs to assist in their communicating and negotiating with AGA. In Margaret Village, AGA attempted to move the community before their sale to Harmony became known, which they viewed as a disregard for the rights of the community members.

b. Access to housing

In Ghana and Tanzania, community members said AGA abrogated their rights to housing by the damage its operations caused to the people's homes. In Ghana, the incessant blasting in AGA's open cast mining sites located close to the communities has rendered most houses in Anwiam and Tebrebie uninhabitable, with deep cracks.

In Tanzania, two out of the three communities have experienced severe damage to housing due to AGA's explosions. AGA had provided some compensation, they said, but it was only enough to patch up the cracks. In reality, the houses had become inhabitable and needed to be completely rebuilt.

In South Africa, the problems faced were over ownership of the properties. ➤➤

> … Communities generally struggle to access the accountability mechanisms that hold these corporations accountable.

In the Vaal region, the community had asked AGA to build houses for miners but after AGA left the houses were handed over to the local government, not the miners. The mineworkers who had lost their jobs after AGA left could not afford rent and the lack of maintenance after the mines closed made things worse.

c. Safety and security concerns

In Ghana, AGA has erected a giant wall around its main operational area in Obuasi. The company says the wall is to prevent "trespassing" by people from the surrounding communities who it says have been stealing from its residential quarters. People in Anwiam can no longer access the shortest route to the main Obuasi township. Children now have to walk about four miles to catch the school bus and women say that the road they now have to use is not safe at night and becomes unusable whenever it rains.

South African communities said criminal syndicates have emerged since the mine closed and unemployment in the area increased. Abandoned buildings have been occupied by criminals, making the areas extremely dangerous. They reported this has made these mining communities into crime hotspots and women have reported sexual violence.

d. Lack of compensation

In Ghana, respondents complained about the appropriation of their land by AGA without adequate compensation, depriving them of their sources of livelihood. Some of these respondents, mostly farmers, had to endure years of litigation at great cost to get the company to pay them the compensation due to them.

In Tanzania, respondents said AGA had violated their human rights by failing to compensate them for land that has been seized by the mine since 1998. The community was prevented from developing large swaths of community land that had previously been used for economic activities, including farming and grazing, and communities are no longer allowed to access these areas. A few of the villagers were compensated, but they said the process was not transparent and the amount they received was unreasonable.

In South Africa, during the apartheid era, many indigenous people were stripped of their land rights and have not received compensation. In addition, mineworkers have been struggling for compensation from multiple mining companies, including AGA, after developing silicosis as a result of their exposure to toxic dust. In one case affected mineworkers won a case against AGA but not all have been fully compensated to date.[4] Other former mineworkers said AGA had not assisted them in accessing their pension or provident funds after their employment with the company came to an end.

e. Corruption

There is anecdotal evidence of corrupt practices in all three countries, including around the involvement of local government structures and traditional authorities who apparently undermine transparency.

In Ghana, community members who had grievances against AGA were told to remain silent by the chief, who has ties to AGA. One interviewee in Tebrebie was summoned to the local chief's palace and warned to stop criticising the company or "face the wrath of the elders". Residents of communities in Anwiam, Anyinam and Sanso in Obuasi as well as Tebrebie in Iduapriem said they live in constant fear, always looking over their shoulders before voicing an opinion against AGA. Moreover, respondents from Anwiam, Anyinam, Sanso and Tebrebie all complained about difficulties related to organising peaceful demonstrations against AGA. The problem appears to start with the police who erroneously tell the communities that they need a permit. However, the Public Order Act requests protestors inform the police in advance about planned protests but they do not need a police permit to protest. It is believed the political leaders of the district try to stop protests because they are concerned this will "dent" the company's image.

In Tanzania, community members claim that members of the council and some local government officials benefit from the few projects that AGA funds, but they as the community don't. They say contributions from AGA for community development usually don't reach them; projects are implemented in the town council but not in the villages or areas close to AGA mines.

In South Africa, community members in Margaret Village expressed difficulties with contacting local government officials for help and said when they do make contact the officials seem to be working in the interests of AGA, not the community.

f. Abuse of power by security forces

The involvement of the police in violent actions against miners and community members is not uncommon, and in some instances, attacks are carried out by private security forces.

In Ghana, reports of security operatives working on behalf of AGA and harassing members of the communities were rife. These security operatives accused some community members of being illegal miners or trespassing on the company's concession. In the process of driving them away, some community members were injured. Sometimes the presence of the security officers in the communities alone caused fear and panic. A female interviewee from Anwiam near Obuasi recounted an incident when she fell and was injured when the military stormed her community and chased them away because they were suspected of being illegal miners. Another interviewee from Anyinam, a community in Obuasi, cited how all the leaders of a demonstration against AGA were arrested and detained for more than two weeks.

In South Africa, artisanal miners shared accounts of AGA using police and private security to intimidate them.

g. Artisanal miners' rights to make a living

All the communities that participated in this study indicated that many residents turned to artisanal mining as a means to make a living and survive, even though artisanal mining poses a health risk and the constant danger of being arrested.

In Ghana, since November 2006 the military and police have been conducting a country-wide operation named Operation Flush Out, in which hundreds of people known as "galamsey" are forcefully removed from the land they are working on. An unknown number of galamsey have been shot, beaten and maimed by members of the private and state security forces. When the mine was closed between 2014 and 2019, numbers of miners who had been laid off came back as artisanal miners because they needed to earn a living. When the mine reopened, AGA worked with the police to have many of those miners removed from the site.

In Tanzania, AGA has appropriated almost all the land that contains gold in Geita Town District Councils and some areas in Geita District Council. Only one ward, Mgusu, allowed a licence for a single plot for artisanal mining. The plot was granted to a local community cooperative that permitted artisanal miners to conduct mining operations. Many more community members are involved with artisanal mining compared to the few that work for AGA. The artisanal miners have no interaction with AGA and operate independently although they say they would like to work with the company and get its support.

In South Africa, artisanal miners are found in mines in Carletonville and Stilfontein formerly owned by AGA. They face high risks whether they are working on the surface, at tailing storage facilities or mine dumps, or underground where they risk robbery, kidnapping and rape by syndicates underground. They are also exposed to a toxic mixture of chemicals that pose health risks. However, artisanal mining continues as it offers alternative livelihoods to the otherwise unemployed or laid off AGA mineworkers in the towns of Margaret and Kuma.

Conclusion

The research has shown that while there is no evidence presented here that the company did not comply with national laws in the three countries AGA has been able to evade accountability, which amounts to the violation of human or environmental rights. In many cases, AGA has indicated that it does not intend to communicate with the communities or to be transparent when it comes to how communities are impacted by the mines. Although the three countries have different laws and policies, we see similarities in how AGA operates. As a corporation, AGA only has a duty to *respect* the rights of the mining communities, while the duty to *respect, protect, promote* and *fulfil* the communities lies with the government. This is of concern to those communities because in most cases local government structures are seen to be protecting the interests of AGA and not those of the community.

It has also shown a disregard for the environmental impact of mining on the community and the ecosystems. In all three cases, acid mine drainage was a major problem that infringed on the community's rights to clean water and damaged the natural water sources within the communities. This study shows that AGA is failing to respect basic rights such as housing, access to clean water and the right to a healthy environment.

IFAA would like to thank the Open Society Foundation – Africa for its support for this research project.

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ENDNOTES

1. UN General Assembly I*nternational Bill of Human Rights*, 10 December 1948, A/RES/217(III)A-E.
2. Article 32 of UN General Assembly, United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples: resolution adopted by the General Assembly, 2 October 2007.
3. AGA was formed in 2004 after a Ghanian High Court passed a highly contested judgment to merge AngloGold and Ashanti Goldfields Company (AGC).
4. See https://www.qhubekatrust.co.za and https://www.tshiamisotrust.com NA

The study made the following recommendations

Overarching

- CSOs should continue playing a role in drafting the Binding Treaty and states should support it once it is finalised and adopted;
- States need to ensure community members have direct access to courts without needing to go through government structures that have been compromised.

State bodies

- Ghanaian district assemblies should incorporate development goals into their planning framework and should protect vulnerable mining communities in their engagement with mining companies.
- The Environmental Protection Agency in Ghana should sanction companies such as AGA that repeatedly degrade the environment. These regulatory bodies should be seen to be on the side of the communities. The Minerals Commission should also be more proactive in dealing with mining companies who flout the terms of their mineral licences.
- The Commission on Human Rights and Administrative Justice in Ghana should be more proactive in taking concrete steps to empower mining communities in their dealings with mining companies. They can reach a wider audience through the mass media (radio, television) and social media.
- In Tanzania, the local government should be more transparent regarding the support it receives from AGA.
- The Tanzanian government should consider establishing alternative water sources, including drilling wells for vulnerable communities.
- The Tanzanian local government should establish transparent procedures to show who receives royalties and how they are used. This should be used to establish compensation schemes, especially for housing damage and for the proper relocation of people.

Civil society organisations

- The help CSOs in Ghana provide to build capacity within mining communities in the areas of compensation negotiations, legal empowerment and environmental monitoring should be scaled up so that communities can "own" their struggles.
- In South Africa, processes need to be set up at a regional and civil society level to increase pressure to expose violations and ensure tracking and investigations are carried out.

AGA

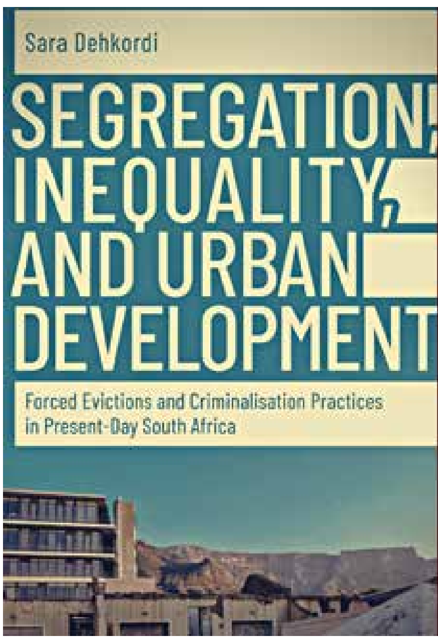
- AGA should uphold the highest environmental and social standards in their operations so that mining communities can enjoy safety and security instead of relying on external agencies.
- AGA should stop treating activists and human rights-based CSOs as enemies. It should support activists to develop a better relationship with the community and find common solutions.
- AGA should provide support and opportunities for artisanal miners to interact with and learn from its qualified staff and should also provide Personal Protective Equipment where possible to protect artisanal miners.
- AGA should eliminate the bonus system and instead improve wages. It should offer bursaries and other forms of social support to communities.

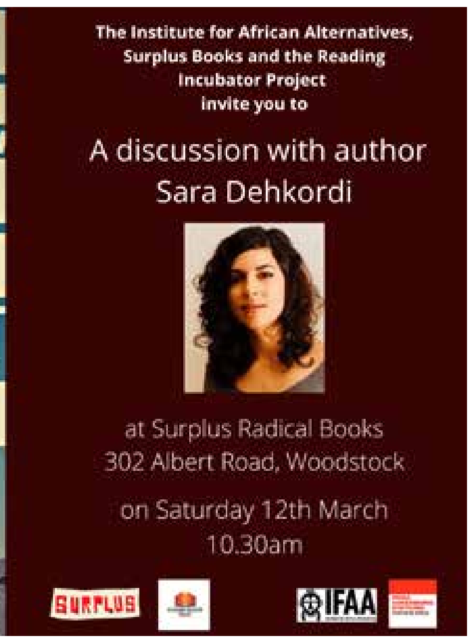
Forced evictions that did not end with apartheid

a necessary part of urban development projects

By Moira Levy

Moira Levy is the Production Editor of *New Agenda*, the flagship journal of the Institute for African Alternatives (IFAA).





SARA DEHKORDI, Iranian born and German educated, is a critic of the forced evictions of poor people in Cape Town, not under apartheid, but in the last 20 years. She addressed a recent IFAA Forum on "segregation, inequality and urban development", the title of her recent book, and pointed out how our municipalities and property developers have criminalised the urban poor. IFAA hosts regular public and online Forums at Surplus Radical Books in Woodstock.

Sara Dehkordi was only three months old when she had her first experience of political resistance. When the Ayatollah Khomeini became the first Supreme Leader of her country, Iran, her mother wrapped her up and took her off on a long journey into exile. After two months on the move, they arrived in Germany where they settled down to many years of exile. Her father, who was a guerrilla fighter at the time, eventually joined them there, but only much later. It was a fitting start to a lifetime of activism and exile.

The adult Sara now lectures at the Free University of Berlin on postcolonial and decolonial theory, colonial genocide, Negritude and the Black Consciousness Movement, the neoliberal impact on urbanisation and development and, broadly, peace and conflict studies. Her activism is now expressed at least in part through her writing, teaching and research.

It was therefore not unexpected that she would embrace the anti-apartheid struggle and the decolonisation project in Africa. Research for her master's thesis brought her to South Africa for the first time ten years after the democratic elections. She readily ››

> **… urban development agendas have inscribed doctrines of desirable and undesirable life in city spaces [that have] legitimised and legalised … the criminalisation of lower-class members of society.**

concedes that she enthusiastically and uncritically bought into South Africa's post-1994 Rainbow Nation discourse prevalent at the time.

She had romanticised the ANC, Nelson Mandela and the struggle for democracy, she said, but then she came to Stellenbosch on a student exchange.

"When I got here for the first time I was disillusioned, and also very disappointed with myself for so easily buying into the dominant Eurocentric discourses. When I got [to South Africa], I discovered my own ignorance and stupidity."

What she soon observed was the persistence of racialised and segregated urban spaces, forced evictions that did not end with apartheid and the criminalisation of the urban poor who continue to be caught up in these ongoing struggles.

She has published a book, *Segregation, Inequality and Urban Development: Forced Evictions and Criminalisation Practices in Present-Day South Africa.* In it she describes what she saw in South Africa on that first trip, and subsequent visits, as the "high concentration of class inequalities and divided urban and rural spaces still underpinned by race concepts". Despite her deep engagement with communities and activists, she writes consciously as an outsider. Her keen internationalist perspective frames and tilts the mirror she holds up to free and democratic South Africa.

Dehkordi recently addressed one of IFAA's regular public Forums that are hosted jointly with Surplus Radical Books and its Reading Incubator Project. She argued that the persistence of such racialised practices are not only the result of our colonial and apartheid legacy, but also "a necessary part of the realisation and regulation of urban development projects that strive for a competitive, marketable, profitable and investor-attracting city".

At the Forum she spoke out strongly against the neoliberal narrative directed at the urban poor and powerless and placed recent urban forced removals in Cape Town in the context of what she calls Urban Development Discourse. In her book she defines this term as "an umbrella term for government and business discourses on urban planning, on the role of the market and the city inhabitants' relationship with the market, on housing, evictions and socio-economic exclusion and inclusion".

She told the Forum: "The neoliberal agenda on development projects the capitalist imagination on landscape [as a] blank space. It says 'No one lives there, or no one of any worth lives there … people who have to be removed are being removed [and] are not worth listening to'."

She had more to say about Urban Development Discourse, describing it as "the dominant discourse, [which is] informed by colonial discourse. It adopted a language from the colonial project, framing the colonial subject as lazy, not profitable, not creative, devoid of history, not clean, something inferior, childlike – as savage.

"This discourse today adopts the same language, the same rhetoric [as colonial discourse], only today maybe the label 'savage' has been replaced by 'criminal'."

Her book explores how in present-day South Africa, urban development agendas have inscribed doctrines of desirable and undesirable life in city spaces. She shows that these doctrines are being legitimised and legalised as part of a discursive practice and that the criminalisation of lower-class members of society are part of that practice.

> **… the dominant post-apartheid discourse that targets lower-income groups, marginalising them for illegal occupation, effectively criminalises them and then rationalises and justifies forced evictions.**

The book incorporates incisive reactions to the views of explorers, historians, artists and commentators on South Africa and the Western Cape in particular. She documents how segregated city spaces, the displacement of people from their homes, and criminalisation practices are structured and executed.

The question she posed at the Forum is: "How is neo-liberalism able to do that, how is it able to take all these different, powerful narratives and turn them against the subject it wants to marginalise and use only as a cheap workforce?"

Dehkordi said she has come to the conclusion that neoliberalism is able to "continuously, perpetually find solutions to its own contradictions. There is never a final stage of neoliberalism; it actually exists because it can reinvent itself over and over again."

Embedded in almost all the different forced removals across the African continent and beyond that to the Global South – "look at what has happened in Ethiopia, Nigeria, Senegal, Kenya, Sierra Leone" – are the Bretton Woods institutions, such as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, who are "financing development projects that lead to forced removals".

She paid tribute to those who have long fought against forced evictions in South Africa; "This work evolved out of the struggle memory of so many people involved."

At the IFAA Forum, Dehkordi asked how "silences in politico-economic discourses are produced and what can be learned from the people who shared their testimonies, and more generally from the South African political experience of the past 25 or 30 years."

The majority of people who are forcibly evicted are being marginalised and criminalised in the process. In her book Dehkordi refers to "the dominant post-apartheid discourses that target lower-income groups, marginalising them for illegal occupation, which effectively criminalises them and then rationalises and justifies forced evictions, making the normalisation of forced evictions possible. This then becomes the discursive discourses of government, developers, investors and the media."

The persistence of racialised and segregated urban spaces places the forced evictions and the criminalisation of the urban poor in the context of our colonial and apartheid legacy.

At the Forum, she cited various recent forced removals in the Cape Town metro – for example, the 2012 eviction of poor families from District Six who had been living for many years in a block of houses that had escaped the 1960s Group Areas Act demolitions. They were told they had to leave to make way for the development of the area. The city offered to move them, but they determinedly refused, resulting in an impasse that continued for five years.

In 2009, 20,000 from the Joe Slovo section in Langa township were evicted to make way for the city's N2 Gateway Project. This was a high-profile project to provide homes for the homeless – but it excluded most of those who had been evicted and made homeless to make way for the development.

There was also the 2009 evictions of pavement-dwellers from Symphony Way in Delft. The city council offered only one alternative – to be moved to the appropriately named Blikkiesdorp or "Tin Can Town", one of the government Temporary Transit Camps on the Cape Flats. In the 2011 evictions from Tafelsig in Mitchells Plain homeless people, fed up with their decades-long wait on the waiting list for housing, occupied open land. They found themselves in protracted legal battles and violent protests that went on for years.

There are many such examples of post-apartheid evictions of the thousands of people who have set up shacks or tents on sports field, pavements and other unoccupied spaces, many owned by the city council, to create homes for their families.

Dehkordi pointed out how middle class areas are enclosed and separated from the city at large. This reinforces the discourse of racialised and segregated urban spaces by excluding and barring entry to parts of the city by those defined as "other". The irony of this is that the very people required to enforce this separation are usually security guards, who themselves are largely excluded and marginalised.

She believes most of them "are not happy with what they are doing. The moment they take off their uniforms they will be the same subjects that are being targeted [by forced removals] because the majority of security guards also live in informal settlements and townships."

Dehkordi asks, "How is neoliberal urbanism able to incorporate that workforce and turn it against its own guards in that way?"

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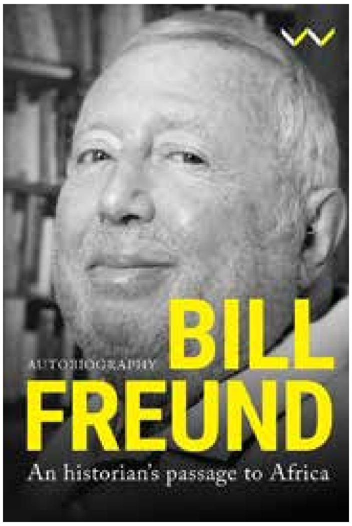

Autobiography Bill Freund: An historian's passage to Africa

Bill Freund

Publisher: Wits University Press, Johannesburg, 2021

Review by Showers Mawowa

Published posthumously, this is a memoir of and by the doyen of African social and economic history, Professor Bill Freund. Described by fellow professor, friend and former colleague at the University of KwaZulu Natal, David Moore as "... the professor who wore the weight of history lightly" (Moore, 2020), by the time of his death in 2020, Bill had authored hundreds of books and academic articles and taught and supervised thousands of students, including myself.

His most famous work, *The Making of Contemporary Africa,* which was republished three times with significant revisions, remains a "bible" for many a student of African economic history (Freund, 1984). The memoir reflects on "*The Making of Bill Freund*" and his ideas and impressively a tribute to the people who made him and his ideas.

The book has 11 chapters that can be subdivided into three parts. The first three chapters sketch Bill's Austrian-Jewish ancestry prior to the First World War until the Holocaust. Chapters four to eight examine the world Bill was born into, one of Jewish immigrants in America, his adolescence and early love of history and Africa. The third section, chapters nine to 11, cover Bill's experience and intellectual contribution to what became his home, Africa, and Durban specially.

Many of the book's takeaways are relevant to our contemporary world.

The book starts with the world of Bill's ancestors, Jews in early 1900s Vienna, Austria, who were never quite Austrian. When race is perceptibly an expression of the socio-economic divide, the national social contract is fragile. He effortlessly makes the point that this partly explains why some Austrians zealously cooperated with Nazis. The class and gender dimensions of this dark hour are well articulated, particularly the vulnerable situation for the poor Jews and women.

Bill's parents were among those who managed to escape and settle in America. The book shares a moving depiction of what "possibly" happened to some of his relatives who were not so fortunate – painful experiences that his family seldom spoke about. For a world currently witnessing horrific scenes in Ukraine and gripped with fear of another major world war, these chapters make for sober reading.

Chapters four onwards can be described as the autobiography proper, describing what life was like in Chicago for the Jewish immigrants, and the young Bill. He makes sense of his parents' left leaning political values, critical attitudes towards Zionism and Jewish traditional identity and how this influenced his own thinking. In impressive detail he reflects on his adolescence, how he grappled with multiple identities, not least gender, nationality, race, class and ethnicity – and of course his parents' immediate Austrian past and status as immigrants. His mother, who was an academic, had the most influence on Bill's life and career.

Perennially among the brightest in class, Bill decided very early on to be a historian. Having been exposed to some of South Africa's anti-apartheid music and culture, by the end of high school Bill was fantasising about Africa. During his PhD at Yale, he found a calling in documenting the social history of Africa. It was this path, via Nigeria and Dar er Salaam, followed by another stint back in America, that finally saw him settle in Durban, the place that became his home until his death.

The final third of the book thus presents Bill's life in and reflections on South Africa, his home. Though he made friends in America, Bill never really found a home there, both intellectually and socially. The American system rejected him and he in turn rejected it. In Durban he found a world of his choosing. He found joy in the "community" of place, people and ideas.

His fondest memories were of Nigeria, Tanzania and Durban where he immersed himself in local cultures and even learnt local languages. He maintained close relationships with people he met along the way. Family relations were important, but the academy was his life, so the many social relationships that Bill developed were in academic circles. The book excellently weaves together the many facets of Bill's life.

The book provides detail about major intellectual influences on Bill. Eric Hobsbawn's " independent Marxism" was most influential (Freund, Autobiography Bill Freund: An historian's passage to Africa, 2021, p. 77), inspiring him to write "a history of Africa that was neither sentimental nor a patronising attempt to identify racialised victims nor a colonial apologia ... but a synthesis that integrated the economic, political and cultural at the centre of African history".

Bill's PhD was on early Dutch settlement in South Africa. Other influences include works on power elites by C. Wright Mills's, Fred Cooper and Martin Legassick on Africa and South Africa respectively. He credits Van Onselen's *Chibaro: African Mine Labour in Southern Rhodesia* for inspiring his work on tin mining in Nigeria (Freund, 1981).

Bill's story is a reminder that the academic path is not among the easiest or the most lucrative. The South African academy has been bleeding young bright black academics whose economic and family realities force them into the more financially rewarding job markets. Bill Freund could relate to this, and he was most supportive to young black academics. As the memoir shows, he faced similar pressures, but chose to follow his passion. It was not until the age of 40 that he got his first permanent job, at the University of KwaZulu-Natal.

Bill makes a critical observation that many African students tend to research and write about the places they are from. This often leads to very original and interesting research, but teaches them little about the wider world. True, but there is an economic dimension to this and research funding incentives could address this.

The last chapter represents a "coming out" of sorts. Bill shares a candid assessment of South Africa's social, political and economic trajectory since 1994. First, he laments the ANC's failure to forge social cohesion across race and class. This is not only essential for the social project, but also for forging a developmental alliance between business, state and labour. Business takes some of the blame he argues.

Bill once believed it was the ANC that could bring about redistribution without ruining the country, avoiding another Zimbabwe. Over time, however, he grew skeptical.

There are some notable improvements – access to housing, electricity and water, the abolishment of capital punishment, sexual rights, media freedom and a progressive tax system among others – but overall, Bill became disillusioned, an idealist who ratified the idea of liberation but was horrified by corruption, levels of crime and lack of state capacity.

This leads me to my two final observations. Bill was critical of what he saw as simplistic invocation, if not instrumentalisation, of race. For him class, rather than race, was a more important way to view and analyse social relations. One gets the sense that as he aged, he became more open about this. The Cuban Revolution which never stressed race in isolation was a better model, he argued.

Lastly, Bill was a leftist pragmatist, but I wonder if this is something he grew into or was merely shaped by his historical materialism or both. He is unequivocal that modernisation has its place and so does capital.

One can conclude that Bill was not a believer of socialism utopia, for three reasons:

- Capitalism, despite recurrent crises, has through "competitive structuration" and its ability to invent new products, shown indomitable resilience. This Schumpeter calls "creative destruction" (Schumpeter, 1942) though Bill cautions that climate change might place a limit.
- Socialism, he argues, requires a strong and effective state.
- Thirdly, redistribution needs growth. He contends, "... without a road to accumulation, this country could go nowhere ..." (Freund, 2021, p. 148). He belabours the point, "Without economic growth, there is no possibility for equalisation, even of opportunity ..." (Ibid, 184). This a lesson derived from redistributive experiments in Zimbabwe, Tanzania and elsewhere.

But Bill was not attracted by American liberalism either, for the obvious reasons. The European social democracy model was a more realistic option for its growth with redistribution characteristics, but even this requires a capable and effective state presided over by developmental elites.

Dr Showers Mawowa is a Political Economist and former student of Professor Bill Freund.

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Extractives and illicit financial flows:

Towards climate financing for a just transition

Below is a commentary on a research project conducted by Simon Rakei in 2022. It was commissioned by IFAA in fulfilment of a grant awarded by the Rosa Luxemburg Foundation. Read the full research paper on IFAA's website.

What are the possibilities for financing a just transition from fossil fuels to a green/non-carbon-based energy system in Africa? It is estimated that US$300 billion will be required over the next three decades to fully phase out coal production as we construct renewable infrastructure to electrify homes, and meet transport and agriculture needs. This is the central question posed in this new research paper prepared for IFAA by Simon Rakei. Due to length considerations, *New Agenda* has published a summary of the full research paper.

The analysis takes its inspiration and direction from a review of literature on tax justice and on the extractive sector in resource-rich countries.

The "extractive sector" is a shorthand reference to African economies that are largely dependent on raw material/commodity exports. "The UN defines a country as dependent on commodities if they are more than three-fifths of its physical exports. Fully 83% of African countries meet that threshold, up from 77% a decade ago. Some depend on produce such as tea, but most rely on mining or on pumping oil" (*Economist* 8-Jan-22). This paper concentrates on the mining sector in Africa – setting aside oil production and agricultural exports such as old timber.

Africa is rich in the mineral resources that are particularly needed for green energy infrastructure: copper, platinum, chrome, manganese, cobalt, coltan, lithium, diamonds and nickel are among some of the minerals that span the region from South Africa to the Democratic Republic of Congo and beyond that are needed to build infrastructure for solar and wind energy.

The just transition to a lower carbon-intensive "green" economy is jeopardised by the vested interests of governments and independent power producers in Africa. Both are wedded to long-term agreements based on fossil fuel power generation, state subsidies that support a carbon-intensive economy and non-developmental electricity pricing. This means huge, guaranteed profits for companies and less, more expensive, electrical power for communities.

The paper presents evidence that the costs for a just transition to a green economy could be easily met if Africa were to stop illegal financial flows, including trade mis-invoicing and price manipulation at the point of export. Africa has the resources to fund a just transition for itself – but these are totally depleted by foreign companies – aided and abetted, one might argue, by corrupt African governments, criminal gangs and predatory elites.

An innovative aspect of the analysis is the contention that if Africa could stop the siphoning of funds to low tax jurisdictions and capture the huge illegal financial flows, this would pave the way towards a real option for a green economy financing alternative.

The author argues that "tax evasion, illicit financial flows (IFFs), base erosion and profit shifting (BEPS), particularly from the mining sector, have failed to gain adequate attention." It needs to be emphasised that IFFs and BEPS are also extremely concerning for governments in the rich countries. These are not only issues for Africa.

The policy proposal on how Africa could combat illegal financial flows from mining is for "a state-selling agency [that] would mitigate the risk of price manipulation by establishing a fair valuation model for different mineral exports so that minerals are not over- or under-valued."

IFAA thanks the Rosa Luxemburg Foundation for its support for this research project.

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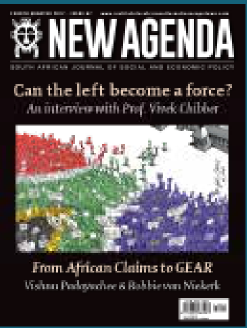

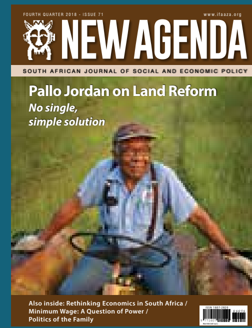

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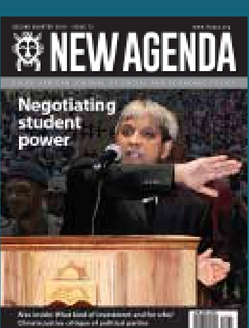

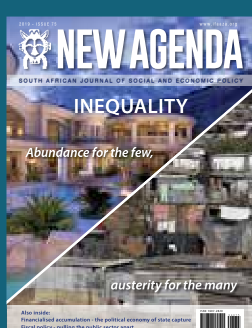

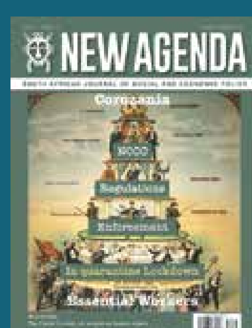

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