

Participatory Workshops as a Tool for Building Inclusivity in New Towns in Africa

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Abstract

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Africa is currently the fastest-urbanizing continent in the world. As part of this rapid growth, New Towns are increasingly employed by private developers as a means of providing well-serviced urban environments to middle- and upper-income groups. These comprehensively-planned New Towns are often seen in contrast to the perceived 'chaos' and 'congestion' of large African cities. As a result, two urban forms, the highly controlled New Towns and the unregulated settlements at their edges, engage in complex social and economic exchanges, but remain spatially segregated and socially exclusive. Current research points to the need for an alternative approach to top-down New Town planning in Africa.

Participatory workshops are one alternative that can offer planners access to local knowledge that is otherwise difficult to access. This paper explores the potential of short-term reflective, design, and serious gaming workshops by reflecting on the experiences of the authors in four recent workshops. The paper evaluates the effectiveness of these workshops as useful tools to increase inclusivity in African New Towns by bringing together stakeholders with competing agendas and supporting open discussion, negotiation, and informed decision-making. The paper concludes that participation from stakeholder groups that would normally be marginalized from the planning process (such as current residents, temporary users, and residents of adjacent unregulated communities), can offer new insights to planning bodies and inform more inclusive New Towns across the continent.

KEYWORDS

African cities, inclusive urbanization, New Towns, participatory workshops, stakeholder participation

1. Introduction

Since being introduced as an urgent research topic in 2013, contemporary African New Towns have attracted an increasing amount of attention among researchers (Watson, 2013). In the years since this first investigation, such New Towns have proven to be fertile ground for researchers focused on aspects such as inclusivity (Bhan, 2013; van Noorloos and Kloosterboer, 2017; Côté-Roy and Moser, 2018; Marcinkowski, 2017), housing (Alaya, van Eerd, and Geurts, 2019), economic significance (Murray, 2015b), and governance (Murray 2015a) in African New Towns. Many of these studies look to specific case studies or take a comparative approach, while other studies take an overarching, continental perspective (Grant, 2015; van Noorloos and Kloosterboer, 2017; Keeton and Provoost, 2019).

Distinguishing between New Towns developed by national governments and those led by private developers, these studies build a profound critique of contemporary, privately-developed New Towns across Africa as isolated, exclusive pockets of infrastructure and services. This is seen as partially the result of the top-down planning processes that characterize most privately-developed New Towns in Africa (van Noorloos and Kloosterboer, 2017; Keeton and Provoost, 2019). However, there is growing consensus among researchers that neither exclusively top-down nor exclusively bottom-up development can succeed in the long-term (Grant, 2015; Keare, D.H., 2001; Provoost, n.d.).

Recent literature points to the need for alternatives to the current New Town planning paradigm; alternatives that bring previously marginalized stakeholder into the planning process (Grant, 2015; Keeton and Provoost, 2019). This paper argues that participatory workshops that bring together diverse stakeholders can be useful tools to stimulate negotiation among groups, thereby not only increasing the diversity of voices in the planning process, but also building empathy and understanding between groups with conflicting priorities. By creating multi-stakeholder forums that support access to different types of information, “different interest groups can be brought together to successfully collaborate on planning for and managing cities, and more appropriate local strategies and projects can be developed and implemented” (Smit, 2018: 77).

Using four examples of recent, experimental workshops aimed at influencing the planning of contemporary African New Towns, this paper is a reflection by the workshop organizers on the experiences and outcomes of these workshops. As discussed in section 4.1., Workshop A was organized by Rachel Keeton at TU Delft, the Netherlands, with a group of international, multidisciplinary participants. Workshop B (see section 4.2.) was organized by the International New Town Institute in Tatu City, Kenya, bringing together local planners with a team of Dutch planners and architects. The third workshop, discussed in section 4.3., was organized by Play the City, a private game de-

velopment company, and took place in Khayalitsha, South Africa with a group of local and regional participants. Workshop D (see section 4.4.) was organized by faculty from TU Delft and executed in Rotterdam, the Netherlands.

Although much has been written on the individual subjects of participatory planning and New Towns, there is not yet much available literature that brings together these two streams. This article aims to do so by first describing the theoretical background of these concepts, focusing on interactive workshops as tools to facilitate participatory planning. The main research question is: ‘what issues influence the effectiveness of participatory workshops on African New Town planning?’ Following this, the article discusses the setup, ambitions and experiences of four workshops that aimed to promote public participation in the development of African New Towns. Finally, the article concludes by offering recommendations for future research and summarizing the conclusions made in this paper.

2. Participatory planning alternatives for New Towns in Africa?

New Towns can be understood as new, planned urban developments built on previously undeveloped (greenfield) sites. Keeton and Provoost define contemporary African New Towns as comprehensively planned, mixed-use, intended for more than 10,000 residents and displaying some degree of political autonomy (2019). In different parts of Africa, comprehensively-planned cities that meet this criteria have been deployed as an urbanization strategy since ancient times (although these remain exceptional and smaller villages were a much more common form of development) (Smith, 2007; Ozo, 2009; Ross and Bigon, 2018). There is a lack of data available on the planning processes used in these earliest New Towns, but in their analysis of twentieth-century planned capital cities in Africa, Abubakar and Doan write: “Each of these new towns was designed and implemented by foreign consultants with little involvement of the local community. This is not surprising because the modernist model is top-down, context-independent and based on scientific but not local knowledge” (2017). In contemporary examples, this modernist approach continues to be employed, although the design results may stray significantly from the functionalist models associated with modernist urban design.

2.1 A top-down project is not a city

The latest generation of New Towns in Africa repeats the top-down modernist development model, although the majority of contemporary New Town development in Africa is now initiated and led by private developers rather than national governments (Keeton and Provoost, 2019). Unlike government bodies who maintain long-term management of new urban developments, private developers may see their role in the development process as more

limited and temporary. Because of this, many private developers tend to look at New Town development as the creation of a finite product, or a project to complete and then sell. This approach does not sufficiently allow for flexibility or adaptation over time, and does not accommodate the needs of a pluralistic society.

As Chris Marcinkowski writes, “What is at issue with this particular format [private New Towns] is that much of the housing being produced is simply inaccessible to the general population from a financial point of view without substantial government subsidies that many of these countries simply cannot afford to provide” (Marcinkowski, 2017). Indeed, UN-Habitat estimates that over half (61.7%) of the urban population of Africa is made up of slum-dwellers (2012). Developers and decision-makers commonly see the urban poor and unregulated settlements as a reflection on the failure of urban policies, when comparing their cities with international standards. With this in mind, they may lean towards eviction and slum clearance or prohibition rather than looking for new ways to integrate the urban poor into the planned city (Klopp, 2008). However, researchers point to the need for more participatory planning processes in order to create New Towns and cities that are more inclusive and reflective of local realities (Scott, 1998; Myers, 2011; Abubakar and Doan, 2017). As Warren Smit argues, the urban governance landscape in Africa is complex and often difficult to navigate: “Key urban governance stakeholders... need to be brought together in collaborative processes to jointly develop and implement new strategies that are based on a broader range of interests and meet a broader range of needs” (Smit, 2018).

2.2 Academia versus practice

Rendeavour is currently one of the largest private developers of New Towns in Africa, with projects in five different countries. Tim Beighton, Head of Marketing & Communications for Rendeavour, calls African New Towns an “academia-defying subject” (personal communication 11 April 2018). His critique reflects the view that academic literature on this topic tends to vilify private New Town development without acknowledging the complexities developers face in the drawn-out process of attempting to secure land, commissioning various studies and master plans, and finally contracting construction companies. While academics may be guilty of simplifying the challenges of implementation, their critique of contemporary New Towns across Africa as exclusive enclaves deserves acknowledgement. Many developers are unwilling to address this issue with any real commitment, excusing their developments as housing that meets market demand.

Despite this disconnect between academia and practitioners, there are opportunities for researchers to engage directly with developers. Short term workshops are one way to create a forum in which different voices can be

heard. This has benefits for all participants, as it may be the first time they are brought into contact with each other and (perceived) power differentials may be temporarily reduced or removed, allowing for real negotiation. In the context of contemporary African New Towns, this form of direct participation may help address the problem of top-down development that prioritizes one form of urban development over the needs of the majority. As Richard Grant concludes: “The core ideas of these opposing camps [academics and developers] are the antithesis of each other. A more productive way forward is to pursue a dual track that allows for showcase and iconic new urban projects while focusing special attention on slum urbanism and creative thinking that links the two approaches and situates urban projects within a sustainable development paradigm.” (2014: 294).

2.3 Participatory workshops as planning tools

Since the term ‘design participation’ was introduced fifty years ago at the 1971 Design Research Society conference in Manchester, participatory planning and design have gained traction as accepted working methods (Cross, 1972). In their book *Routledge International Handbook of Participatory Design* (2013), editors Jesper Simonsen and Toni Robertson connect the shift towards collaborative design processes to the collective actions and civil rights movements of the 1960s and 1970s (2013: 2). Today, participation in the planning process is increasingly seen as a requirement by both private industries and public bodies engaged with planning and development. Jenkins (2006) even refers to a ‘participatory culture’ of the current climate, as illustrated by new types of media and social engagement through digital forums. In this context, short-term, multi-stakeholder workshops are widely acknowledged as a participatory tool in the ‘design participation’ toolbox to catalyze stakeholder communication and negotiation.

As planning tools, workshops have the potential to create environments of democratic decision-making and transparency that can achieve results that other planning tools cannot. By giving stakeholders ‘equal’ voices in the design or decision-making process, a workshop may be able to bring new ideas, connections, needs, desires, and networks to the foreground. At their best, such participatory approaches can “enable collaboration, negotiation and the coconstruction of knowledge” (Wynne-Jones, S., North, P., and Routledge, P. 2015: 218).

Despite their current popularity, however, participatory workshops face considerable threats. Because they are a function of interpersonal communication and relationships, there is no way to fully control these events. Researchers have pointed to highly subjective tensions such as trust, loyalty, guilt and discomfort as “complicating ingredients” in participatory design (Wynne-Jones, S., North, P., and Routledge, P. 2015: 219). For workshop or-

ganizers operating outside of a familiar cultural context, complications can quickly multiply.

3. Methodology

The analysis of the workshops in Section 4 is based on the first-hand participation and organizational experiences of the authors, as well as their extensive experience with African cities and planning process. To make this assessment, the authors have compiled and analyzed reports of the workshops, reviewed empirical evidence, interviewed workshop participants, and evaluated published results from secondary data such as newspaper articles, Press Releases and participant websites.

The scope of this analysis is limited to four workshops in which the authors were involved, all of which took place between 2014–2019 with the stated ambition of improving participatory planning in African New Towns. The four workshops were also selected to illustrate a diversity of organization, intention and outcomes.

Public participation events generally occur because planning bodies or decision-makers lack knowledge, capacity or resources (Fung, 2018). Deciding who participates in workshops has a direct impact on whether these deficiencies will be appropriately redressed, and requires consideration of workshop goals as well as workshop constraints. One may ask, “Are [the participants] appropriately representative of the relevant population or the general public? Are important interests or perspectives excluded? Do they possess the information and competence to make good judgments and decisions? Are participants responsive and accountable to those who do not participate?” (Fung, 2006:67). Designing a successful workshop therefore begins with matching participant selection to established goals. As elaborated in Section 4, Workshop A was organized with *selectively-recruited participants* based on individual expertise, while Workshop B was organized with *professional stakeholders*. Workshop C brought together *lay stakeholders* and *professional stakeholders*, while Workshop D allowed for *self-selected participants* among attendees of a larger international conference on future African cities.

In his seminal article “Varieties of participation in complex governance”, Fung outlines three dimensions along which mechanisms of participation vary: “[1] who participates, [2] how participants communicate with one another and make decisions together, and [3] how discussions are linked with policy or public action” (Fung, 2006). Short, intensive workshops can be a useful way to bring together diverse stakeholders (whether selectively recruited or self-selected), structure the interaction and communication between these groups to achieve specific goals, and move the planning process forward efficiently. As a precursor to workshop organization, stakeholder analysis should be done in order to establish the ambitions, resources, and

interdependencies of various groups (Freeman, 1984; Bryson, 2004).

The goal of a workshop may vary. Examples in Section 4 include Workshop A, which attempts to translate the expertise and opinions of 21 multidisciplinary experts into a single, coherent set of planning principles for African New Towns, and Workshop B, which attempts to bring together professional planning experts to contribute to an existing master plan design. In both cases, the workshops were designed to achieve maximum cooperative potential and to reduce threats of obstruction (Fung, 2006).

4. Reflective, design, and serious gaming workshops for African cities

This section describes four workshops that share the central aim of contributing to more socially and environmentally sustainable New Towns in Africa. As described in the first example in this section, reflective workshops may be used to refine existing proposals or specific aspects of plans among a multidisciplinary group of experts, providing an expert review. Design workshops may be used to evaluate or develop an alternative to an existing design. In the second example in this section, a design workshop was used to give an alternative perspective on an existing master plan for a New Town. Reflective and design workshops are more practical in nature, while serious gaming workshops are informed by a more robust theoretical background, as illustrated in the final two examples.

Serious gaming has developed a rich theoretical underpinning over the last decades and can provide a systematic and collaborative approach to problem-solving that meets the needs of different city makers, whether designers, politicians or other relevant agents (Dorner et al., 2016). ‘City gaming’ is a specific form of serious gaming that encompasses application to urban issues. In city gaming, participants come together in environments designed to minimize the obstructions, opposing values, or power differentials that may inform communication outside of the game. This environment, which is designed by the game developer, allows participants to exchange institutional and individual knowledge, strategize and (sometimes) come to collective agreements. “By transforming serious issues into a playful and engaging (although no less serious) experience, city gaming unlocks difficult conversations and helps to build communities in the long term. The urban design, policy and action plans generated collaboratively through gaming will increase social coherence and local agency, as well as cutting costs and time in urban development processes” (Tan, 2014). City games thus function as a tool to support the integration of top-down and bottom-up ambitions.

4.1 Workshop A: “Urban Lab: Imagining adaptive planning for African New Towns” by TU Delft (2017)

The “Urban Lab: Imagining Adaptive Planning for African New Towns” took place on 8 June 2017 at TU Delft. This event was organized by Rachel Keeton in collaboration with the International New Town Institute and with financial support from the Delft Global Initiative. The workshop was a parallel event within the Urban Thinkers Campus on Education at TU Delft from 7–9 June 2017. The twenty-one workshop participants were selectively recruited experts from a range of backgrounds, including academia, urban planning, government, and environmental analysis.



Figure 1. Workshop participants discuss and evaluate the proposed planning principles to reach consensus during the *Urban Thinkers Campus* in Delft, the Netherlands. Image © Rachel Keeton 2017.

The aim of the workshop was for participants to critically examine a proposed set of planning principles from multidisciplinary perspectives, and ultimately build a set of coherent adaptive planning principles that meet the diverse criteria brought into discussion during the workshop. By employing deliberation and negotiation mechanisms, and taking a holistic view of the urban challenges related to African New Towns, the participants collectively arrived at an equitable set of principles (crossing traditional disciplinary boundaries) to drive inclusive, adaptive planning forward through effective urban design. Application of these principles and their spatial implications was explored in later workshops. The workshop was successful in achieving

the goals of the organizers partly because the invited experts were engaged in the topic and acknowledged the urgency to challenge the current planning paradigm (Keeton, 2017).

4.2 Workshop B: “New Town Lab: Tatu City” by the International New Town Institute (2018)

The New Town Lab at Tatu City, Kenya, was co-organized by the International New Town Institute, a “think and do tank” based in the Netherlands, and KUWA, a Nairobi-based research and urban planning office, at the request of Rendeavour, the private developer behind Tatu City. A New Town Lab is a rapid planning workshop in which a selected group of international and local experts work together for one week with the aim of finding a convincing and innovative concept for urgent planning issues. The Lab took place from 9–14 September 2018 and brought together Dutch experts on urban planning, water management, circular economy and spatial design, staff from Rendeavour including Kenya Country Head, Senior Development Manager, Urban Infrastructure Manager, Head of Development Control, and Community Lead, among others. Additional Kenya-based professionals and local residents also participated in the workshop.



Figure 2. Area chiefs reflect on the local needs of residents near the New Town development of Tatu City, Kenya. Image © Christine Waithera 2018, used with permission.

In Tatu City, the workshop addressed the main question: “How can we create a connected network of green and blue spaces that acts as a sustainable and resilient backbone for Tatu City?” The workshop built on previous site research conducted by KUWA that provided valuable insights into the social, economic, spatial and ecological aspects of the surrounding context. Workshop participants spent the first part of the week gaining a deeper understanding of the New Town and its context, while the second part was spent designing an alternative vision for the green and blue network in Tatu City’s existing master plan. Finally, a public presentation of the results was made and participants discussed potential ways forward. According to Rendeavour Head of Country Nick Langford, the results of the workshop supported a main goal of the Tatu City team: “We are keen to focus on building a cohesive city that embraces not just our residents’ use of public space, but also the use by communities living around Tatu City” (Rendeavour, 2018).

4.3 Workshop C: “Play Khayelitsha” by Play the City (2014)

In February 2014, The City of Cape Town’s planning office met with Play the City to discuss a city gaming approach that would help bring new ideas to the table for the centre of Cape Town’s second-largest township. Adapting Play the City’s established methodology to the local goals and context, the game design team created a prototype to be tested during the ‘Department of Design’ (a three-week co-creation event) in July 2014.

The first iteration of the game attracted about 60 players, including members of the Cape Town municipality, VPUU, and residents of Khayelitsha from various backgrounds. By playing the prototype, Play the City was able to gain feedback and insights that allowed for improvement to the game.

The second iteration was played by informal traders, local entrepreneurs, and government representatives. Primarily, the goal of the game was to help local traders who have worked in the centre for decades to compose a future vision for their township. “Play Khayelitsha” addressed the area’s acute infrastructural, governance and programmatic needs through a negotiation game designed to help transform the township centre into a more inclusive public space.

One unexpected result was the local traders’ expression of their long-term interest in land ownership. Many of the government representatives and others around the table had never heard of this desire, which ultimately became a major point of negotiation throughout the rest of the game. The idea of setting up a ‘Traders’ Co-operative’ emerged from discussions during the game as a way of increasing the traders’ bargaining power by collectivizing their interests. This outcome was further explored through spatial designs that would support such the new organization. The game was therefore successful in achieving the goal of supporting long-term transformation of

Khayelitsha's urban centre by catalyzing discussion and negotiation among different stakeholders.

4.4 Workshop D: "Afropolis" by TU Delft (2019)

"Afropolis: Co-creating Sustainable Solutions for Affordable Housing in Africa" was held on 8 April 2019 at the Van Nelle Fabriek, in Rotterdam. This workshop was organised by Nelson Mota, Brook Teklehaimanot, Sophie Oostelbos, and Gonzalo Zylberman (TU Delft) and included in the programme of the 2019 *Africa Works!* Conference, organized by the Netherlands–Africa Business Council. Afropolis was one among fourteen workshops and round-tables offered to the attendees of the conference. The workshop was organised twice, with one occurrence in the morning and another in the afternoon. In the morning session, there were six self-selected participants and in the afternoon session fourteen. In both cases, there was a wide range of backgrounds, including academic researchers, teachers, corporate individuals (e.g. working for developers, contractors and banks), members of NGOs, as well as design and planning professionals.



Figure 3. Participants 'play' the serious game *Afropolis* as a side event at 'Africa Works! 2019' conference in Rotterdam, the Netherlands. Image © Nelson Mota 2019.

The initial set-up of “Afropolis” was inspired by the “Jogo do Estatuto da Cidade” (Game of the Statute of the City), developed in Brazil in 2002 by Renato Cymbalista, Raquel Rolnik, Paula Santoro, and Uirá Kayano Nóbrega (Cymbalista et al., 2002). These authors created a role-play game to raise awareness of people’s civic and legal rights safeguarded in Brazil’s “Statute of the City”, a federal law passed in 2001 to promote fair and equitable cities.

Using the format of a board game, the participants of “Afropolis” used a toolkit based on two components: “Actors” and “Urban Elements”, to solve the “Case”. The “Case” was a hypothetical housing project to be developed in a district of a fictional African city, materialised in a 100x100cm aerial view photograph at the scale 1:1000. Each participant performed the role of one of the “Actors”, a typical stakeholder in slum upgrading/redevelopment (e.g. Local politician, Developer, Architect, Slum Dweller). The group of different actors was encouraged to implement their fictional agendas (both open and hidden) while simultaneously creating synergies to reach consensus in the design-decisions necessary to develop the project. To simulate their planning strategy, the players had scale models of three different “Urban Elements” at their disposal: (1) Housing Types: (isolated houses, row-houses, slabs, tower blocks); (2) Amenities (resource centre, kindergarten, temple, commercial block); (3) Open Spaces (playground, garden, square, sports field).

The goal of “Afropolis” was to raise awareness of the spatial and societal implications inherent in design-decisions related to the production of housing. The use of scale models reproducing familiar housing typologies and amenities allowed both design professionals and lay(wo)men to be aware of the social and spatial consequences of their planning strategies. Manipulating the scale models on the aerial view depicting an urban district created tangible scenarios of the consequences brought about by the different design-decisions.

The workshop aimed to illustrate the creative potential of conflicts in participatory design. As the game evolved, participants gradually realised the need to engage in a process of co-creation, to achieve a win-win situation where the different actors’ agendas could be negotiated and conciliated to solve the “Case”, rather than dominating the other players (win-lose situation). The workshop achieved its main goal of raising awareness of the importance of design-decisions in tackling the pervasive housing challenges in African cities. It demonstrated that while governance and management are important aspects in the implementation of housing programmes, design cannot be overlooked if the goal is to create solutions for inclusive and sustainable development.

5. Analysis

Whether such a workshop achieves the goals laid out by its organizers can be influenced by the decisions the organizers take long before the workshop beings. In this section, a qualitative assessment of the effectiveness of the workshops described in Section 4 addresses four influential factors identified by the authors and workshop organizers. These include: workshop location (Section 5.1), participant selection (Section 5.2), workshop organizer (Section 5.3), and workshop goal (Section 5.4). As elaborated in this section, analysis of these individual factors indicates that the effectiveness of a workshop in achieving its goals is the result of an interrelated and hybrid network of factors that may receive varying levels of attention from workshop organizers.

5.1 Where is the workshop?

Two of the workshops discussed in the previous section took place in the Netherlands (Workshops A and D), while three took place in African contexts (Workshops B and C). The location of a workshop can have a major impact on the effectiveness of a workshop. For workshop organizers working in cultural contexts different to their own, the geographic location may limit the participant pool, complicate logistics, or create language and cultural barriers or misunderstandings (Unemoto 2001).

These considerations must be taken into account whether a workshop is organized locally or remotely. Workshop A, for example, was able to effectively bring together multidisciplinary and international experts by combining the workshop with a larger event (Urban Thinkers Conference at TU Delft), and having the budgetary possibility to cover travel costs for participants from abroad.

Not only geographic location, but also the workshop venue itself can influence the effectiveness of a workshop. In Workshop B, the weeklong workshop was held in the Rendevour offices, which allowed for both formal and informal exchanges among participants and fostered interpersonal interactions that benefited the design process. Alternatively, a venue that reinforces perceived hierarchies may stifle open exchanges among participants.

5.2 Who participates in the workshop?

In all four workshops described in Section 4, participant selection played a major role in the effectiveness of the workshops. Participant selection is closely related to the goal of the workshop. In Workshop D, for example, all participants were attendees of a conference (Africa Works! 2019). The workshop was one of many side events that were open to all conference attendees and as a result the participants were voluntarily self-selecting. Workshop D was run twice during the conference, with very different results. The workshop organizers attribute this to the varying backgrounds of the participants

and the number of ‘players’ engaged in the serious game.

As short term workshops related to New Town development in Africa, the choice of ‘who participates’ may proceed from different ideological approaches. An inclusive approach may seek to invite a diverse range of participants including representatives of marginalized groups as well as recognized decision-makers. A ‘bottom-up’ approach may prioritize (future) resident engagement over powerful institutions. Partnering with local institutions can help workshop organizers gain access to groups whose participation is desired.

5.3 Who organizes the workshop?

In the workshop examples discussed in section 4, two of the workshops were designed and organized by academics (Workshops A and D), one was developed by a non-profit institute for a private developer (Workshop B), and one was developed by a private company for a public body (Workshop C). Based on these experiences, the organizers may influence the effectiveness of the workshop when organizers are unable to connect with the participant group, or when co-organizing groups exhibit different or competing interests. Public and private organizing bodies may also prioritize different values, which may compromise the workshop’s ability to meet its goals. In Workshop B, for example, the International New Town Institute (INTI, a non-profit ‘think and do tank’), was invited to organize a ‘New Town Lab’ for Rendeavour (a private New Town developer). This combination resulted in differing expectations for the workshop results, which may have contributed to the lack of follow-up between the partners.

5.4 What is the goal of the workshop?

The goal of a short term workshop must match the duration of the workshop, the capacities of the workshop participants and organizers, and the location of the workshop. The goal, or goals must also be clearly communicated to the participants. In Workshop C, for example, the primary goal of the serious game was to support and facilitate local traders in composing a future vision for their township. During “Play Khayelitsha” the idea of a ‘Traders’ Co-operative’ emerged and was further explored through spatial design experimentation during the game. In this way, the game was successful in achieving the goal of enabling transformation of Khayelitsha’s urban centre by triggering discussion and negotiation among the workshop participants.

5.5 Conclusion

A number of factors determine whether a workshop is able to effectively meet the goals set out by organizers. From the examples discussed in section 4, the authors and workshop organizers identified four factors with perceived influence on the workshop's effectiveness: location, participant selection, organizers and goals. While these factors may individually impact the effectiveness of a workshop, they are also related to each other in complex ways. A workshop that effectively meets the goals set out by the organizers must therefore appropriately address these factors while the workshop is in the planning stages. Failing to adequately consider any of the four factors elaborated in this section can threaten the workshop's effectiveness.

6. Conclusions and recommendations

In their book "To Build a City in Africa: A History and a Manual", Keeton and Provoost build the case that contemporary African New Towns are generally planned in a top-down way, whether by public or private bodies (2019). Especially in the case of private New Town development, the current planning paradigm is not inclusive, and tends to forego participatory processes in favor of streamlined production. This approach may fail to give voice to marginalized stakeholder groups, and may insufficiently incorporate local knowledge, capacities, cultures, and heritages (De Satge and Watson 2018).

There is general agreement among researchers that this approach does not result in inclusive cities, and there is a need for participatory alternatives (Watson, 2013; Grant, 2015; Marcinkowski, 2017; Abubakar and Doan, 2017; Keeton and Provoost, 2019). As Smit concludes: "Collaborative governance can be messy and conflictual, but only through facilitating engagement and collaboration between different urban governance actors can urban challenges in Africa be effectively addressed" (Smit, W., 2018).

One alternative approach is incorporating participatory workshops into the planning process. Through four recent examples that specifically address African New Towns, this paper has shown that such workshops can be a useful tool to stimulate negotiation among stakeholder groups, thereby increasing diversity, sharing knowledge, and building empathy during the planning process. However, as Sun, Tai and Yen (2019) point out, planning training *before* the actual workshop would increase non-experts' understanding of planning-related concepts and potentially increase their ability to productively contribute to short term workshops.

Some limitations of this study are the small size of the sample, and the lack of quantitative evaluation techniques to measure their effectiveness. While Workshop A succeeds in achieving its goal of bringing together disparate viewpoints into a single document, it is unknown whether the design results of Workshop B will be implemented or have any real effect on the ex-

isting master plan for Tatu City. Workshop C was seen as an effective as a tool for forging new alliances and negotiations, while Workshop D allowed for knowledge-sharing and built empathy, but did not have any discernable effect on African cities. These conclusions are interpretations by the authors and workshop organizers based on qualitative analysis of the workshop results.

Future scholarship should develop workshops as tools for participatory planning in African New Towns by including quantitative measures of their effectiveness and focusing on implementation of their results. The authors have been invited to test this new direction by co-organizing a serious gaming workshop in Zanzibar in September 2019. The Zanzibar Department of Urban and Regional Planning (DoURP) needs new alternative methods to engage relevant stakeholders in planning decision-making process, and hearing of Workshop B at the Future of the African City conference in Leiden, the Netherlands, approached the lead author to organize a similar workshop locally. The workshop in Zanzibar brings together the serious gaming methodology developed by “Play the City” and illustrated by Workshop C with the planning principles developed during Workshop A.

While it is clear that more public participation is necessary to foster inclusivity in African New Towns, it is not always obvious which forms of participation can best achieve the specific goals of planners or decision-makers. Participatory workshops can be one way to bring together diverse stakeholders in the planning process. As Fung reminds us, “specifying and crafting appropriate roles for participation... demands forward-looking empirical sensitivity and theoretical imagination” (Fung, 2006: 74). As workshops become more common practice in New Town planning, it will become possible to evaluate the impact of these short-term events on the spatial results. Until then, they remain a useful tool to catalyze negotiations, build consensus and share information – critical aspects of any New Town planning process.

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