

Marelise van der Merwe - Analysis: Africa's Cities, Crying Out For Re- Imagination

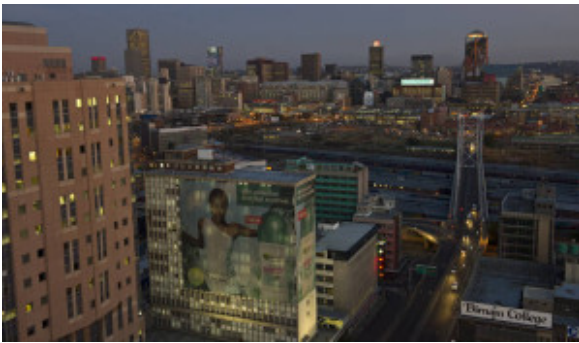


Photo: City of Johannesburg (Greg Marinovich)

dailymaverick.com. July 2014. Africa is second only to Asia in its number of city dwellers, and its cities are growing at an unprecedented rate. Yet understanding of African cities is lagging behind their development. Locally, it's a massive challenge to build a knowledge base that will support the building of more equitable African cities, making them livable, accessible, and sustainable for all. By MARELISE VAN DER MERWE.

Last week, during the budget debates, Human Settlements minister Lindiwe Sisulu admitted that the delivery of housing in all South African provinces was a massive problem and that it had “dropped drastically”. As Rebecca Davis wrote, “The problem, in crude terms, is that too many people are moving to South African cities, and there isn't enough land available for them. ‘We are ill-equipped to deal with this rate of urbanisation”, Sisulu said, though she promised 1,5 million homes over the next five years.”

But, say some academics, migration is not the primary problem. Cities are actually expanding from within - and even without the influence of migration, the rate of urbanisation across the whole of Africa is posing a significant challenge to policy makers, governments and researchers alike. And it's not only a South African problem. Urbanisation in Africa is one of the fastest-growing fields of

study, and stakeholders are working overtime to try to build a critical mass of workable knowledge to combat inequality in the continent's cities.

Read more: <http://www.dailymaverick.co.za/analysis-africas-cities-crying-out>