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## Slum Intervention in Sub-Saharan Africa: A Case for New Tourist Approach

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### Abstract

This study queries the notion of slum as an anathema to the growth and prosperity of cities in sub-Saharan Africa. Slum tourism is discussed as an emerging intervention to address the challenge of slums in the global south. Using ethnographic account and personal reflection of 5 slum settlements and key institutions in Lusaka, a novel approach is proposed: Absolute Slum Tourism (AST) and Relative Slum Tourism (RST), to contribute to the discourse on slum interventions. The study shows that navigating informal settlements through RST approach could significantly influence urban rejuvenation, empower local narratives, giving voice to the marginalised in slum communities and promoting equity. The paper further proposes a new framework for the co-creation of slum interventions, introducing a shift in how informal urban space and residents are perceived.

**Keywords:** Informal settlements; slum intervention; slum tourism; poverty; sub-Saharan Africa

### Introduction

UN-Habitat (2003) refers to slums as run-down zones of the city characterised by five critical factors: insecurity of tenure, poor sanitation, overcrowding, unsafe water and lack of durable housing. This view was also shared by Abbot (2001), considering slum spatial pattern, the challenges it poses to urban planners, and the pressure it exerts on cities' limited resources. However, contrary views on what constitutes a slum were adopted by The United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation (Lilford et al., 2017) and Cities Alliance in their Cities Without Slums Action Plan (Cities Alliance, 2006), which adds complexity to what the slum represents and the construction of interventions. The word 'slum' is very emotive and contentious, as it does not differentiate the living condition of the dwellers from their characteristics nor portray the vibrancy and resilience of the neighbourhood (Mwamba & Peng, 2020). Many SSA nations thus tend to use the terms peri-urban and informal settlements instead.

Slum settlements worldwide accommodate one-third of the global population, with Asia being the region with the highest number of urban poor people (Ooi & Phua, 2007). While most developed countries have managed to overcome the root causes of slum settlements, some countries, such as the United States, are witnessing a comeback and are formulating strategies against their proliferation (Roy et al., 2014). According to the United Nations, approximately 55.3 percent of the global population lives in slum communities in 2018, with this figure expected to rise by another 4.7% by 2030, adding significantly to an already dense slum

population (Sanusi, 2021). This trend will have a significant impact on Africa, with the urban population expected to reach 1.23 billion by 2050 and 50% expected to live in cities by 2030 (UN-Habitat, 2020).

Slums are also visible in many SSA cities and continue to multiply due in part to the legacy of colonialism (Njoh, 2015). Approximately 30 percent of the urban population lived in informal settlements in 2014, with sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) accounting for over 55 per cent (Sahasranaman & Jensen, 2021). This figure is predicted to rise to 58 percent by 2050, further compounding the pressure on already stretched urban resources. The incidence of slum settlements in SSA can also be attributed to weak institutional capacity, poor urban planning, rural-urban migration, poverty, and insufficient investment in low-cost housing (Habasonda, 2012). Slums rather than being a burden on nations may also function as an integral part of the urban social fabric and contribute to the sustainability of local economies mainly through the informal sector. The economic contributions of slum settlements such as Dharavi, India, suggest that these spaces are a unique and vibrant contributor to the national GDP. The settlement generates over US\$600 million annually and employs over 75 per cent of the inhabitants (Dyson, 2012). Although upward social mobility may be difficult, residents may not be trapped in poverty forever. The contributions, productiveness and resilience of slums may be a factor in their persistence. An examination of the evolution of informal settlements and the interventions adopted to address the challenges they pose may provide a foundation from which to create innovative paths to the revitalisation of these communities.

This paper explores slum morphology and interventions to draw lessons and influence a shift in policy and practice. The relationship between urban prosperity and the social and economic effects of slums is evident. As slums continue to proliferate, eradication and resettlement interventions have proven ineffective. These approaches are presented to begin determining a more comprehensive course of action that incorporates previously learned lessons and contributes to the development of an inclusive restructuring technique. An ethnographic research and personal reflection of slum settlements in Lusaka, Zambia is further conducted to provide context on slum exploration and the development of a framework for slum tourism or poorism as a resource.

### **Slum morphology**

The evolution of informal settlements has a considerable role in how slums are administered and positioned. Between the 1820s and the 21st century, the focus shifted from a refuge of criminality and poor-quality housing to one of low-income (UN-Habitat, 2003). This development led to slums being portrayed as a squalid space of poverty, crime, and disease (Habasonda, 2012). This perception may, however, not be generalisable, beyond Southern America for example in Medellin, Colombia known for its notoriety (Hernandez-Garcia, 2013). Most informal settlements in SSA are, when compared to those of central and south America, less notorious. They are simply peri-urban neighbourhoods, some of which are planned, but whose growth contradicts the controlled development of the city. While the image and understanding of slums may vary across regions, their characteristics, and perceptions of them are similar, to a degree. The similarities are however often those which generate tension and position slums as a place to fear. Slum assessments, when conducted by international organisations, seem to disregard the people, culture, gender imbalances, housing, income policy, socio-economic contributions, and resilience. A reflection of the complex and spatial nature of slums (Frenzel et al., 2015; Marx et al., 2013; UN-Habitat, 2003).

The slum is a refuge for the poor and strangers (UN-Habitat, 2012) and is often described differently by various institutions compounding the complexity faced when planning interventions. The Cities Alliance Action Plan described slums as part of the cities that are

abandoned with poor living conditions (Cities Alliance, 2006). The United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) considers slums in terms of inhabitants with limited housing and basic infrastructure (Lilford et al., 2017). These definitions are judgemental and suggest an unconscious bias that vilifies informal settlements. There is little recognition of the value and worth of those places to the individuals that live in them and a failure to recognise the subtleties associated with the evolution, development, and contribution of slums. This urban transition demonstrates the nexus of socio-economic and migration impacts on informal spaces, emphasising its heterogeneity (Sabates-Wheeler et al., 2007). Therefore, slum is not a vacuum, but a shared transitional and transactional space navigated by both the poor and rich within society. This interaction influences investment opportunities, innovation, tourism and the living standard in these spaces.

The last 20 years have witnessed increased global attention on slums following the Istanbul Declaration on Human Settlements of 1996, which saw a shift in policy around the equitable distribution of shelter towards sustainable human development. Since then, slum discussion has become a significant issue noted by the United Nations in their Millennium and Sustainable Development Goals, which seek to improve the lives of settlers and address infrastructural issues. According to Marx et al. (2013), the challenges of slum settlements constitute a poverty trap for dwellers and present concerns for the government and the economy. Slums are heterogeneous and ought to be considered both from an absolute and a relative viewpoint, similar to poverty (Roy et al., 2014).

### **Growth of informal settlements and attributes**

Slum settlement morphology and metamorphosis indicates that informal urban spaces are dynamic in nature. Their spatial aggregation and changes are sporadic and render interventionist criterion debatable. Discussions on legitimacy, whilst visible in the UN revelation on the operational and general characteristics of slums (UN-Habitat, 2003), often overlooks the social angle, a significant factor in slum formation. According to UN-Habitat rural-urban migration, natural growth, and population displacement are amongst the principal determinants of slum development (UN-Habitat, 2003). Rural-urban migration is critical in understanding slums as it portrays the relationship between two distinctive, interdependent markets whose outcomes are unpredictable. While consumer goods are mostly produced in the rural areas and transported outwards, machinery and fertilisers essential for good agricultural yields are routed through cities and urban areas which are usually the financial and economic powerhouse of countries. Tacoli (1998) posits that these associations can occur through linkages across space or sectors. Therefore, the exposure of rural dwellers to city infrastructure may influence their decision to seek a “less green” environment, resulting in uncontrolled mobility and deficient urban infrastructure to accommodate the newcomers.

Some researchers have proposed industry 4.0, a modern industrial revolution, that focuses on strengthening human and ecological interconnectivity through ubiquitous technology such as Internet of Things, artificial intelligence and machine learning, as a way of managing cities' population (Cheng et al., 2022). This new way of thinking in managing cities' growth is becoming essential and the new normal, while unplanned urban space with population growth is considered inauspicious to urban prosperity. Not all planned cities flourish, for example Lusaka, the capital city of Zambia, has over 43 slum settlements (Habasonda, 2012). The Covid-19 pandemic exposes the vulnerability of slum inhabitants to health risks. For example, as observed in Bangalore, India, dwellers found it difficult to maintain social distancing due to the spatial structure, (Wasdani & Prasad, 2020). Mitigation of the pandemic (e.g., lockdown) disproportionately affected slum dwellers, most of whom

depend on the informal economy, with higher incidences of gender-based violence and youth related problems being reported in slums in Kenya (Solymári et al., 2022).

The reliance of the formal urban setting on the informal sector for domestic services could contribute to the spread of the disease, as many dwellers work in middle- and upper-class settings (Sanusi, 2021). Slums are vulnerable to climatic changes due to their high density and unusual poverty (Müller et al., 2014; Rogerson, 2023). Emerging economies, particularly SSA countries are likely to react slowly to climatic changes due to a lack of efficient institutions (Boyd & Ghosh, 2013). In SSA, women and girls are disproportionately affected due to roles occupied within society, such as collecting water, caring for children, food production and ensuring the cleanliness of household and sanitation, all of which further inhibits mobility (Nhamo, 2014). The nexus of slums, inequalities, economic growth and poverty are obstacles to people actualising their potential (UN-Habitat, 2012). Africa is yet to derive benefits from the potential rural and urban migration presents such as entrepreneurship, poverty alleviation and community cohesion (Awumbila, 2014). This, according to Habasonda (2012), could be due to low investment in infrastructure such as road construction. Parikh et al. (2013) observed that in South Africa and India, when infrastructural concerns are addressed, most slum dwellers spend more on education, health, housing and land ownership.

The implementation of cities, without slum action plans that sought to promote sustainable development and strengthen partnerships to alleviate urban poverty, yielded less than favourable outcomes calling to question their robustness (Cities Alliance, 2006). In informal settlements, different definitions of prosperity exist with varied impact, one line of argument explored is the inclusivity of cities and how well aligned they are in fulfilling not only the dreams of formal dwellers but also of informal settlers. A review of past and current interventions in slums may indicate critical gaps on intersections of government policies, actors (both internal and external), perception and voices of slum dwellers.

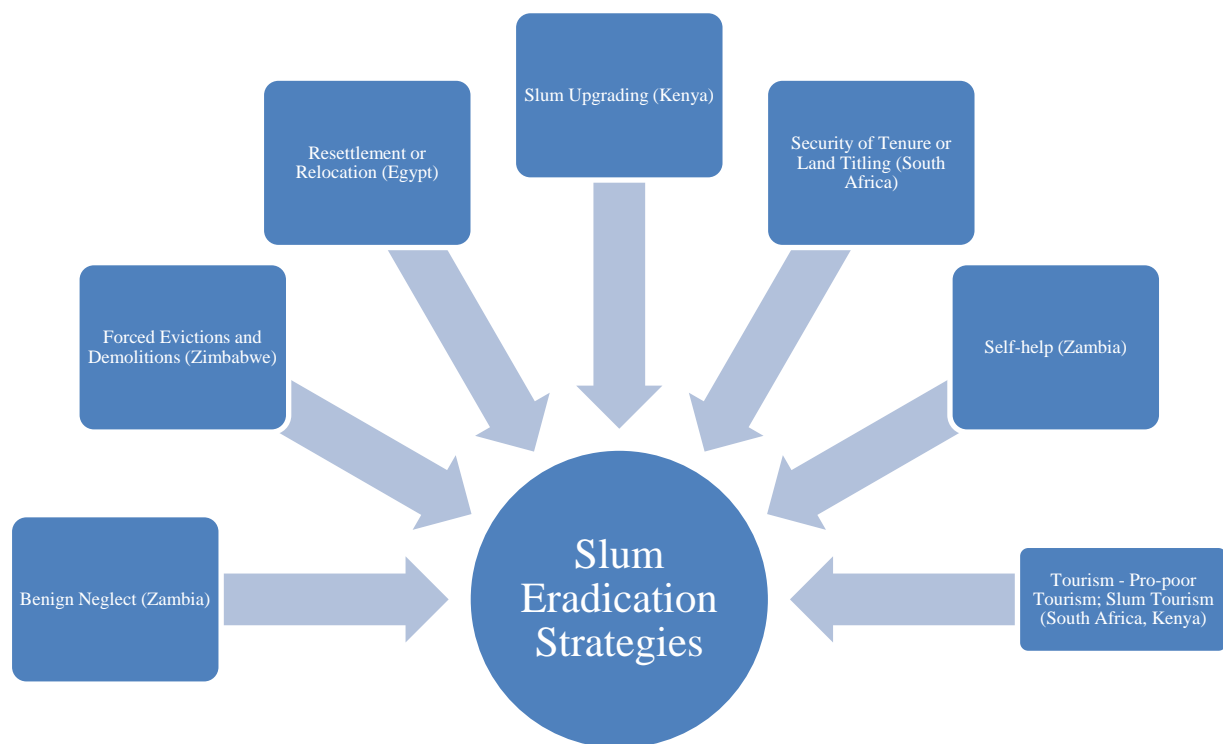
### **Slum interventions in SSA**

The rate at which slums develop is a concern less debated in the planning of interventions globally, particularly in SSA countries. Past strategies to review affordable housing for the poor, such as negligence, self-help (UN-Habitat, 2003), land titling (Marx et al., 2013), forced eviction, resettlement and relocation were adopted to mitigate against slum proliferation in developing countries to no avail. Progression of urban spaces on this downward slope will significantly affect SSA countries, with population growth forecast to be 1.23 billion by 2050 (UN-Habitat, 2020). Eviction may be necessary in situations where the safety and wellbeing of people and property is in danger or when the people who need to be evicted have themselves taken possession of the property through coercion or force (Sanusi, 2021). The process of evicting slum dwellers, however, may be impacted by the length of their occupancy, the size of their settlements, and the support they receive from community and third-sector organisations.

One common strategy used primarily by developing nations is benign neglect, in which decision-makers assumed the problems posed by slum settlements would go away or be solved naturally (Marx et al., 2013). The proponents of these approaches held the similar belief that the problems with urban housing would require more resources and time, which are frequently scarce. Others believed that assisted self-help could help slum dwellers live better lives and ultimately lead to the eradication of slums. The Todaro paradox, however, contends that "slum living standards cannot be improved without generating an additional influx of rural migrants," with government failures seen as playing a crucial part (Marx et al., 2013).

Slum upgrading or participatory slum improvement was suggested by UN-Habitat and embraced by the leadership of most SSA countries due to its impact on the security of tenure,

eviction and poverty alleviation (World Bank, 2002). However, there is a precarious reliance on aid and non-governmental organisations to finance slum upgrading activities, with many slum dwellers and governments lacking adequate resources to engage in the upgrading process. The continuous expansion of slums could prolong slum existence and raise questions about finance (Marx et al., 2013). The resettlement of slum inhabitants explored as an alternative approach due to optimal use of city spaces and inclusion of multiple stakeholders in decision making (UN-Habitat, 2003). However, resettlement could alienate or marginalised neighbours and should not be assumed to resolve the ineptitude of government housing plans. Figure 1 below captures slum eradication strategies in SSA.



**Figure 1: Slum eradication strategies**  
 Adapted from Arimah (2010).

Organisations that work in slums have acknowledged land tenure as one of the crucial elements of regularising slum housing and a major contributor to the squalid living conditions. The claim to any portion of land in slum settlements demands proof of tenancy, a legally binding proof of ownership which many slum dwellers lacks, as land mostly illegally occupied. This usually leads to many residents becoming resentful of where they live and lack the motivation to support its progress and development, tenure instability puts the protection of property in slums at risk. Pro-poor tourism (PPT) was proposed as an alternative for economic growth and could generate net benefit for the poor (Ashley et al., 2000; Nisbett, 2017; Torres & Momsen, 2004). However, more research is required to ascertain effectiveness of PPT due to lack of visibility and inclusivity of the poor in decision-making and short-termism (Frenzel et al., 2015; Mekawy, 2012; Sifolo, 2015). Interventions in slums are complicated and could be weaponized by powerful elites for political reasons, both nationally and internationally. There are also internal-autonomous interventions aligned with PPT principles such as urban farming,



incubation of informal market and entrepreneurship. The challenges of slums seem political and externally influenced, placing the panacea at the doorstep of dwellers or internal actors may be counterproductive in mapping a path for sustainable community-led interventions. Slum tourism although not fully explored, could indicate other existential areas overlooked in current framework on slum interventions.

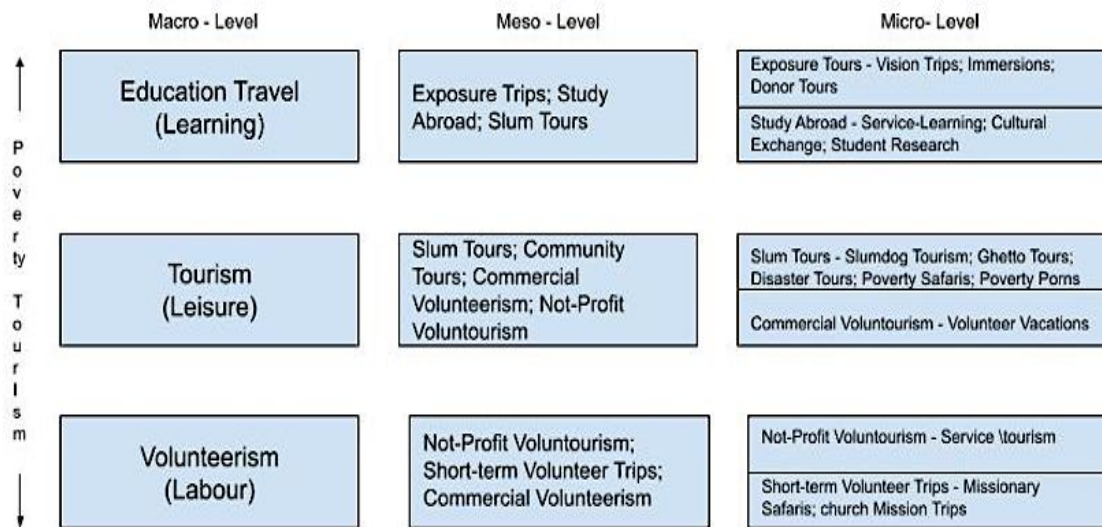
### **Slum tourism: A potential intervention gap?**

The tourism sector is an economic force, attracting inward visitors and investment (Torres & Momsen, 2004). Developing countries benefit from > US\$1.5 trillion in global export revenue as a result of this practice (UNWTO, 2016) which is associated with poverty alleviation, employment, women empowerment and food security (Drammeh, 2015; Richardson, 2010). International tourism to Africa generated US\$43.6 billion in 2014 and created over 8.7 million jobs (AfDB, 2016). Over one million visitors now travel to developing countries for leisure with the objective of touring informal settlements (Frenzel, 2016; Ratho, 2019), in part influenced by media images (Freire-Medeiros et al., 2013; Mendes, 2010). Indicating a shift in perceptions of slums as a space of diverse interaction (Lilford et al., 2017). Achieving tourism growth in SSA requires adequate skillsets and professionalism, particularly in poor neighbourhoods that may be vulnerable to exploitation and should be locally led (Draper et al., 2009). The lack of tourists for example may worsen economic situation or push people mostly women into sex tourism (Cabada et al., 2007; Tichaawa & Mhlanga, 2015).

Introducing tourism into poor urban spaces is not new, according to Nisbett (2017), the concept was initially employed in the 90s' to address inequalities and social disparity in Asia and Africa (Rolfes, 2009). The practice (Slumming) was also popular in the 19th century among wealthy Londoners (Frenzel, 2016; Ratho, 2019). According to Steinbrink et al. (2012) slum tourism is "the touristic valorisation of poverty-stricken urban areas of the metropolises in so-called developing or emerging nations which are visited primarily by tourists from the Global North." This introduces a different dynamic to how slums are explored or exploited which further compounds the interaction between poverty and tourism. The discordance between tourism as a mechanism by which to eradicate poverty and poverty as an attraction creates a conundrum in appropriateness of its adoption (Frenzel et al., 2015; Mekawy, 2012).

Slum tourism is mostly conducted by large tour operators such as Reality Tours and Travels (RTT) in Dharavi, Mumbai (Diekmann & Hannam, 2012; Frenzel et al., 2015; Hannam & Diekmann, 2010; Sanusi, 2021). The practise has changed, been promoted to a global audience, and is now primarily run by stakeholders outside of the slum (Kieti & Magio, 2013; Nisbett, 2017; Rolfes, 2009). However, these activities often do not lead to tangible interactions between host and visitors. This was also noted by Kieti & Magio, (2013) in Kibera, Kenya, and is believed to negatively impact economic benefits (Mowforth & Munt, 2009), with links to voyeurism, gentrification and stigmatisation (Dürr, 2012; Freire-Medeiros et al., 2013; Frenzel et al., 2015).

As illustrated in figure 2, the potential of slum tourism is categorised under three core levels. At the macro level, poverty tourism could provide the necessary impetus for learning, leisure and labour with visibility on commercial implication presented at the meso and micro levels. There are three contradictory views on slum tourism: those who liken slum to a zoo setting (Steinbrink, 2012), a practice that engenders feelings of shame and promotes the "otherness" of the poor (Frenzel, 2016); secondly researchers such as Cawthorne's (2007) who focused on the role of the slum as a driver of entrepreneurship, and thirdly Weiner (2009) who is convinced of its ability to reduce poverty and promote socio-economic activities.



**Figure 2: Cataloguing of different types of poverty tourism**  
 Adapted from Ausland (2010)

Policies on integrating the informal sector may be crucial to building capacity within slum spaces, so value can be captured and transition becomes effortless. Slum spaces are continuously evolving, and slum tourism presents a different narrative in this transformation crucial to future perspectives on the management and branding of informal settlements (Hernandez & Lopez, 2011). Slum tourism is also crucial in providing a counter argument to the adoption of slum upgrading and other slum eradication mechanisms in designing slum settlements interventions. Previous eradication mechanisms appear ineffective, and some researchers are sceptical of slum tourism's potential. This article considers a new framework that critiques the pragmatism of urban spaces and the relevance of actors, including the roles they play in urban renewal and shifting visitor perspectives. However, slum tourism should not be viewed as a panacea to addressing the complex socio-economic development gaps in sub-Saharan Africa.

## Methods, discussion and analysis

### *Ethnographic tour of Lusaka slums and personal reflection*

A tour of slums in Lusaka revealed slum tourism might have potential in SSA and play a role in poverty alleviation and urban rejuvenation. The leading researcher explored multiple institutions and five slum settlements in Lusaka between 2015 and 2022: Kalingalinga, N'gombe, Garden, Matero and Chipata. The Zambian tourism sector is predominantly concentrated around game reserves and contributed nearly USD 2 billion, accounting for approximately 7 percent of GDP) in 2019, with tourist expenditure exceeding USD 800 million (Sanusi, 2021). The sector also provides alternative opportunities to Zambians who had left farming or migrated to the urban settlements for employment.

An ethnographic approach ensures the researcher observes first-hand the reality and viability of slum tourism in SSA, but supports the process of describing, critiquing and analysing the slum environment (Nisbett, 2017). The service of a gatekeeper was instrumental in visiting the slums, particularly Kalingalinga, where study entailed driving and walking through the settlement. The researcher also visited the Olympic Youth Development Centre (OYDC sports centre), Centre for Urban Research and Planning (CURP, formerly LUSIC), University of Zambia, Patents and Companies Registration Agency (PACRA) and Youth for



Sport, restoration and Rehabilitation (YOFOSO), a local non-governmental organisation in the Garden slum settlement.

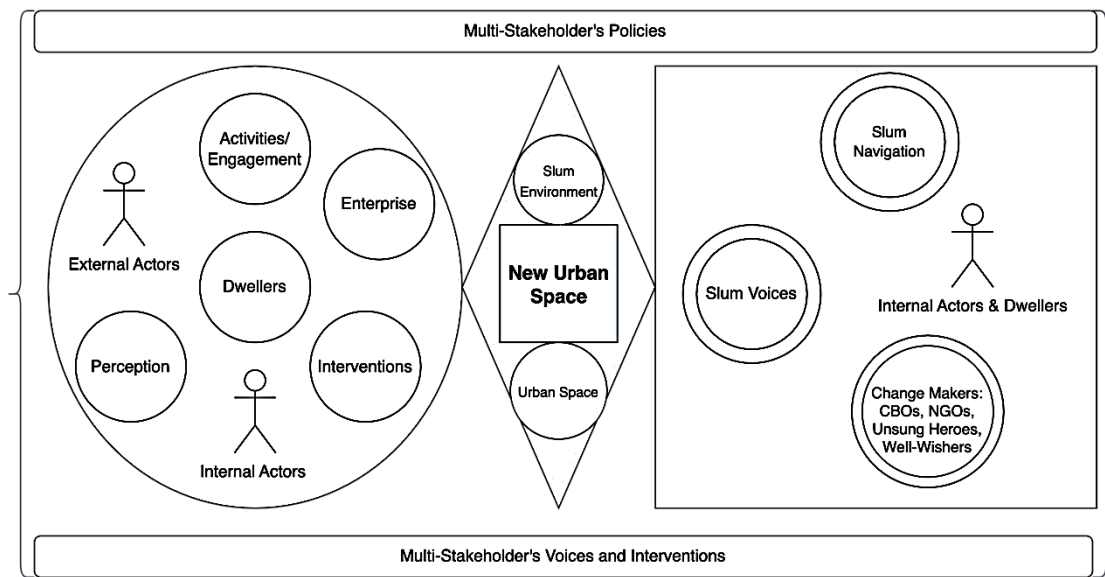
The first visit on the tour was to CURP, where the researcher observed the participation of slum dwellers in GIS mapping and capacity-building activities. OYDC, close to Chipata slum, absorbed slum dwellers and engaged them in activities such as swimming, basketball, netball and hockey. The researcher's interactions with stakeholders on this tour exposed the challenges face by slum inhabitants and their resilience. At OYDC in 2015, educational space to teach neighbouring slum dwellers was vacant due to a lack of teaching staff and volunteers. For many dwellers who visited the centre, the affordability of formal education at all levels was a primary issue, as cited by the centre coordinator. Many often resort to begging from visitors as a coping mechanism.

One of the other organisations visited was YOFOSO, a centre where new arrivals, primarily rural migrants to the slum, begin the process of integration to urban settings. The centre lacks infrastructure and relies heavily on individual donations and international funds, according to the centre director. This also revealed some of the roles NGOs could play in slum tourism viability and exposed the need for synergy among stakeholders. Overall, the tour experience indicates that slum tourism in Lusaka appears to be less developed and branded than slum settlements in Brazil, Colombia, India, Kenya, and South Africa, as perceived by researchers such as Frenzel et al. (2015). During the slum tour economic and social activities including community capacity of slum dwellers were observed and evidence. The tour of Lusaka slums suggests that activities and contributions of slum dwellers seems invisible in most urban spaces visited, therefore interventions may be less reflective of the residents. Constructing a new framework that captures voices of stakeholders may be instrumental in mending the fragmented slum social fabrics (Rogerson, 2023).

### ***Towards constructing a new framework for slum interventions***

Current slum intervention strategies appear to be heavily influenced by government policies and external voices, as suggested by the framework below. The slum neighbourhood, 'formal' urban space and slum voices including impact of change makers, internal actors and dwellers are less integrated. Slum environment is considered alien to the urban space and often connote a negative perception in the minds of 'formal' dwellers. This impedes the natural integration of slum dwellers and promotes the stigmatisation and voyeurism revealed by dwellers. The enterprise and cultural contributions do not equally count in the framing of interventions, with views and voices of external actors louder in policy formation. Genuine changemakers (including unregistered local organisations, unsung heroes and well-wishers), slum voices, and internal actors are mostly excluded from slum debates, and continuous improvement is less incorporated in monitoring and review procedures. A new framework is therefore required which addresses core themes of the findings and some of the issues raised in the personal reflections.

The incorporation of slum voices, internal actors, and change makers into the urban mix is important for unpacking and bringing to light the slum discourse aimed at the creation of a new urban space. This paradigm shift is critical to the 'formalisation of informality' in slums, addressing issues such as integration, policy co-creation and production, the role of dwellers in the national economy through enterprise, cultural migration, and tourism enrichment. A stakeholder's policy that captures the aspirations of both government, internal, and external stakeholders is essential in this reflection. It will reveal the push and pull factors of slum growth and interventions, document the experience of slum dwellers. Lessons learned could contribute to best practice in slum engagement and encourage the role of change makers in forging a pathway for multi-stakeholder interactions.



**Figure 3. Proposed slum conceptual framework**

As illustrated in figure 3 above, the proposed conceptual framework project a new urban space that encapsulate the characteristics of slum environment and urban spaces. Here slum environment is not regarded as hindrance to the growth of the ‘formal’ urban space and integrated into policy debate and future interventions. The role of change makers is also incorporated to provide new perspectives and inject momentum into slum urbanism discourse. Slum navigation is also considered as slum are spaces of multiple interactions and engagement, the experience of visitors often enhances its viability and brand. In navigating the new urban space, two slum tourism approaches are proposed – AST (Absolute Slum Tourism) and RST (Relative Slum Tourism).

As slum tourism involves tours of slums and potential engagement with slum dwellers, visitors are essential for slum resilience and rejuvenation. Therefore, how visitors or tourist navigate slums is critical in the debate on slum tourism and acceptance. This is significant as voices of the dwellers are less reflected in current intervention and many tourists assume slums are spaces of poverty. As illustrated in table 1, the AST approach is typical of common slum tours which occur within the slum settlement, with tour operators less engaged. These tours typically focus on exploring the slum from the inside out, omitting the extracurricular activities that slum dwellers engage in, which creates a limited narrative and experience that can be detrimental. The capabilities of the people and the activities in which they participate are ignored. Although tourism may promote awareness and understanding of the living conditions of the people, it may not result in transformation.

**Table 1: Touristic implication of relative and absolute slum tourism**

Relative Slum Tourism (RST)	Absolute Slum Tourism (AST)
Slum activities external	Slum activities internal
Novel Perspective	Traditional Perspective
Community and tourist contact visible	Community and tourist contact less visible
Slum dweller's voices active	Slum dweller's voice passive
Slum images boosted	Slum images less positive
Knowledge exchange between tourist and settlers promising	Knowledge exchange between tourist and settlers less promising

The RST approach involves engaging slum residents outside the slum, such as at their place of employment, recreational settings, or places of interest, before exploring or interacting with them inside the slum settlement. The visitor either observes or participates in the activity and interacts with the organisation, which influences perception. They discover the resiliency and willingness of slum dwellers to contribute to economic development. Through interaction with outside actors, slums can gain a new perspective in the minds of tourists who visit them, increasing their visibility. Since the RST approach gives more people a voice and portrays slum dwellers as contributing members of society, it may have a more favourable effect on the local economy. Table 2 below shows keywords associated with slums, their definitions and examples.

**Table 2: Keywords linked with slum urban spaces with definitions and examples**

Slum Keywords	Definitions	Examples
Slum Environment	Spaces occupied by slum dwellers for the purpose of engagement and interaction.	Kalingalinga, Favela, Dharavi
Enterprise	Informal trades or markets established by slum residents.	Wood carving, Pottery, Metal Fabrication, Carpentry
Internal Actors	Local slum-based organisations or individuals involved in slum revitalisation	Sport Coaches, Mentors, Elder Statemen, Retired officials, Police Post - Officers, CBO's & NGO's, Local Clinics.
Activities/Engagement	Regular events host by slum residents	Football Tournaments; Christmas Party, Burial Ceremony, Wedding and Naming Ceremony.
Dwellers	Inhabitants of slum settlements	Men, Women, Youths and Children
Interventions	Activities or changes initiated by internal or external actors	Slum Upgrading, Resettlements, Eviction, Demolition
External Actors	Organisations or individuals based outside of the slum (opposite of internal actors)	International NGO's, Government and Academic Institutions
Perception	Views of slum dwellers held by 'formal' residents and external players	Poverty, Criminality, Laziness, Illiteracy, Illicit Activities
Urban Space	Areas of the city that the government has designated as legitimate and possessing security of tenure	City Squares, Civic Buildings, residential areas with tenancy, offices, lands with planning permission and documentations.
Slum Voices	The aspirations, potentials, and future prospects of slum residents	Participations in slum debates, improvement and decision making
Change Makers	Organizations or individuals critical to slum improvement but are frequently silenced or ignored in slum debates.	Unregistered local organisations, unsung heroes, Philanthropist and well-wishers
Slum Navigation	Visitors' engagement and perception of slum spaces as a result of exposure, interactions, or introduction to slum spaces	General Slum Tours, Individual Tours (with/Without gate keepers), Absolute Slum Tourism (AST) and Relative Slum Tourism (RST)

## Discussion

The proliferation of slum settlements in SSA is evidence of shortcomings in eradication strategies (Marx et al., 2013; UN-Habitat, 2003). Evaluation of the system and more recent iterations indicate there is scope for developing contextualised packages of interventions more suited to the changing realities of slum settlements. 19th Century slumming and slum upgrading can be used to create slum tours to give visibility to challenges in slums whilst inviting individuals and organisations to contribute to improving slum conditions. While the debate on slum tourism focuses on visits to informal urban settlements, the broader concept of poverty tourism is often ignored. Yet, poverty remains a characteristic of most slum settlements that limits the potential of individuals. Poverty tourism could offer alternative perspectives to the informal and formal tourism sectors. Ausland (2010) in cataloguing poverty tourism, suggested three main areas - education (learning), tourism (leisure) and volunteering (labour). At the meso-level poverty tourism is further broken down into activities such as study abroad,

slum tours and non-profit voluntourism (see figure 2). This is where individuals make their intention known of specific poverty tourism activities they intend to pursue.

At the micro-level, further layers emerge, suggesting different distinct interest areas. This challenges the notion that only ‘poor’ people only need assistance, and poverty tourism can thus begin to be seen as mutually beneficial. This is not to ignore the likelihood of an increase in illicit activities. Individuals travel to offer their services or help needy people, which could be a developed country lacking in labour or expertise. This is mainly done through volunteerism or educational travel to support local needs. In considering slum tourism as an interventionist tool, academics, decision-makers, and slum stakeholders ought to be intentional in assuming the role of the slum tourist within the informal urban space. There should also be an understanding of slum dwellers’ needs and capabilities and the transitory nature of slum settlements. This could limit concerns about voyeurism and increase tourist-host interactions and collaboration, lending to a more conducive environment for economic growth and development. Facilitating capital investment in slums to provide goods and services is necessary. But without fixing poverty and the social determinants of health such as jobs, employment, health care and schools, anchoring tourism and slum may be challenging.

PPT strategy may have also promoted the development of Poorism as a niche market with the potential for national economic growth. Although SSA countries have huge potential in this sector, it is yet to be fully embraced due to links to stigmatisation and voyeurism (Dürr, 2012; Freire-Medeiros et al., 2013; Frenzel et al., 2015; Rogerson, 2023). These benefits remain untapped and less marketed considering their economic and social welfare capabilities (Frenzel, 2014). The Dharavi and Medellin tours have also changed slum tourism perspectives with community integration and regeneration potential. However, limited opportunities in slums could raise participation concerns (Nisbett, 2017) and complications arise as dwellers participate in illegal and informal entrepreneurship such as prostitution and gangsterism (Marx et al., 2013), exacerbated by issues of poor infrastructure. Tourism is often left out of the discussion about interventions, but there are some researchers who suggest it has capacity to encourage inward investment and plays a key role in networking, poverty alleviation and economic improvement in the informal sector (Lilford et al., 2017; Tichaawa & Mhlanga, 2015). Some of the reasons for low visibility of tourism as a strategy in slum management may lie in the allocentric nature of tourism in Africa.

Most tourism to Africa is focused on exploring nature and games (Litvin, 2006; Rogerson, 2023; Tichaawa & Mhlanga, 2015) and the lack of tourism infrastructure and institutions is a concern. Other challenges include the focus of tourism on poverty over networking between visitors and hosts (Ausland, 2010). The concept of tourism is also new to the poor and benefits of interactions may take time to emerge. Tourism leakages also have a detrimental effect on trust and relationship building with host communities and can limit the extent of mutually beneficial partnerships (Ashley et al., 2000). Generally, trust seems to be lacking in slum policy formulation in SSA both from a strategic and place branding perspective. The use of gatekeepers is advisable but may not be necessary as tourists can blend into the slum community if they are from a similar ethnic background or culture. Slum tourism or Poorism has gained popularity in the rebranding and revitalising of failing local economies in the townships of South Africa, Favelas of Brazil, and slums of Kibera, Kenya and Dharavi, India. Tourists visit these neighbourhoods not only to gaze or ridicule but also to contribute towards achieving socio-economic and developmental goals (Frenzel et al., 2015).

Slum tourism activities are most common in the global south, with visitors usually from the global north, generating discussion among researchers about the voyeuristic and egoistic nature of the activity (Dürr 2012; Steinbrink, 2012). This may lead to stress and anxiety in the host community (Crossley, 2012). Which may indicate why slum tourism has not traditionally

been considered a tool for poverty alleviation in slums. Cawthorne (2007) presented a more optimistic viewpoint, inclined to the entrepreneurial characteristics and a lens to ethnographically explore how communities are structured, which could be a first step in developing interactions with host inhabitants. There is a paucity of research on slum tourism in SSA, a determination of its feasibility or success is therefore challenging and requires further inquiry (Frenzel & Koens, 2012). The rise of the allocentric visitor may present an opportunity for growth in the tourism industry as relates to informal settlements. However, due to the evidence against the practice, some researchers consider the nexus of tourism and pro-poor strategies contradictory (Ashley et al., 2000).

## Conclusion

This article contributes to the discourse on slum and tourism and adds to knowledge by proposing a new framework for slum interventions in SSA. Two new approaches to slum navigation and exploration (Absolute and Relative slum tourism) are proposed. The research explored slum tourism as an interventionist tool in informal settlements and presented an observation of slum tours of Lusaka and personal reflection. Travelling through Lusaka revealed the impact of tourism in SSA and the potential of slum tourism. The visit exposes the need for slum visibility and the move from stigmatisation, voyeurism and formalisation. Also, the necessity for synergy among stakeholders who directly or indirectly benefited from slum engagement. Understanding slums and their internal and external interaction is complex, as evidenced by the different and problematic definitions. The general premise that slums are squalid no-go areas may not be accurate, as the drivers of slum settlements and coping mechanisms in settlements are mutually exclusive. Therefore, alternative approaches should be explored in navigating poor urban areas. This may, in turn, impact policy, change perceptions and build capacity.

The engagement of key stakeholders in slums is critical if this is to be achieved, hence should be encouraged and the support for RST embraced by policy makers. Interventions in slums are often designed and funded by outsiders with minimal input from residents. This can compromise the appropriateness and acceptability of interventions to improve conditions in slums. Some interventions are capital intensive and do not often build capacity nor lead to prosperity among the dwellers. Tourism in most SSA countries appears misaligned with the aspirations of poverty tourism, therefore impeding tourism contributions and the actualisation of tourist goals. Hence, Poverty cannot be solely blamed for migration to cities and slum proliferation. The drivers of rural-urban migration, poor rural linkages to cities, trust, short-sightedness, and short-termism of policy are also contributing factor.

The paucity of research on slum tourism in SSA indicates the need for further study and the developing of a conceptual framework for meaningful slum tourism. Slum settlements changes over time and are not homogenous, as evidenced by gentrification and new investments. As a result, historical evidence is required to support some information cited and the existence of organisations mentioned in this study. This research has also explored few SSA settlement in Lusaka, so data may not be generalisable across slums. Future research may further explore the implications of slum tourism adoption in SSA and how understanding could contribute to changes in policy and practice.

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