



# Housing Informality in Expanding Ethiopian Cities: Moving beyond the 'New Normal' Syndrome

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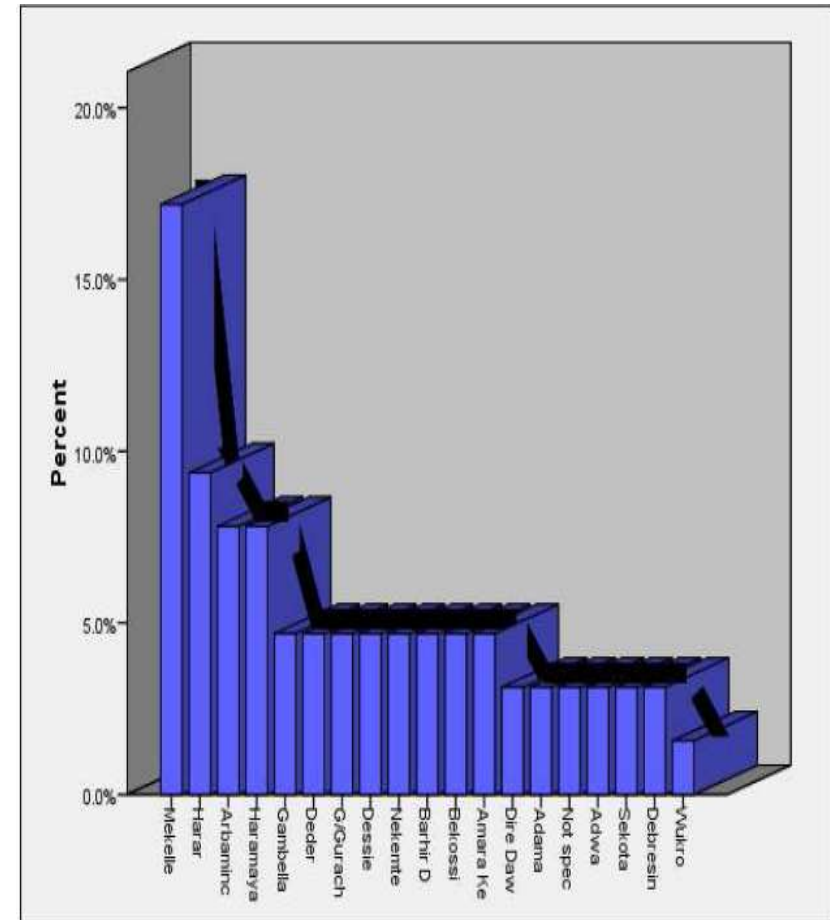
- The Millenium Development Goal Target 7/11 of significantly improving the lives of at least 100 slum dwellers by 2020 will certainly depend on the credibility of approaches and systems put in place to deal with the challenge of housing informality.
- Unfortunately, knowledge of what works best for developing nations has been impoverished by complex processes of globalization that have seen many such approaches and systems reflecting planning ideas borrowed from the global North.
- The informal housing sector has regrettably over the years benefited immensely from planning ideas and approaches simplistically transferred from the North to Southern contexts.
- Such 'normal approaches' - as they have turned out to be called have impoverished planning thinking and practice.
- While the concept of 'normality' has often been justified on grounds such as globalization induced 'best practice' this analysis takes the view that the concept is directly at odds with the reality of socio-spatial dynamics and practices in cities and regions which have been increasingly subjected to peculiar global economic forces.
- The analysis seeks to contribute to the ongoing debate about what appropriate forms of interventions would work in different informality contexts.
- It does so by reviewing the extent to which different forms of institutional responses to housing informality have worked for different urban local settings in Ethiopia



## MATERIALS AND METHODS

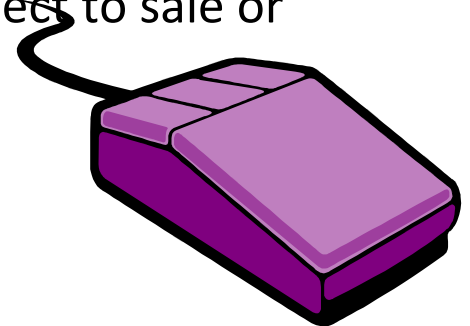
- The study utilized the survey method, interviews with selected officials, and the review of government and municipal documents to generate empirical data.
- Through the Delphi approach, a questionnaire was distributed to 60 key informants drawn from all regional states of Ethiopia in January/February, 2009
- Data gathered was complemented by individual research work
- conducted in a sample of 10 Ethiopian cities and or towns in 2008/09.

Administrative Map of Ethiopia



# Formal land delivery system in Ethiopia

- The major formal land delivery system for residential housing and investment in Addis Ababa and other big cities is through the lease mechanism. But in some smaller towns it is on a rental basis.
- Land is a public property and an individual can enjoy only the use right of land under his/her possession.
- Thus, the means to acquire legally (formally) a plot of land for housing development, and investment purpose is dependent on the efficiency of the lease policy.
- Lease proclamation No 272/2002, is the current active law regarding land provision.
- The Ethiopian constitution (promulgated in 1994), retains state ownership of the land. Article 40, sub-section 3 of the constitution states that land “is exclusively vested in the state and in the peoples of Ethiopia.
- It further stipulates that ‘land is a common property of the nations, Nationalities and Peoples of Ethiopia and shall not be subject to sale or other means of exchange.’”



# Housing informality in Ethiopia

Table 1. Compliance to required planning and/or design standards in a sample of five towns.

Adama city (n = 75)			
	Kebele 03	Kebele 14	Total
Rural kebele administration	1 (2)	3 (10)	4 (5)
Buying from farmers	24 (53)	10 (33)	34 (45)
Buying from speculators	14 (31)	7 (23)	21 (28)
Gift from relatives	4 (9)	6 (20)	10 (13)
Occupation through force	2 (4)	4 (13)	6 (8)
Addis Ababa/Yeka subcity (n = 110)			
	Kebele 19	Kebele 20 & 21	Total
Rural kebele administration	1 (2)	1 (2)	2 (2)
Buying from peasants	19 (35)	10 (18)	29 (26)
Buying from speculators	21 (38)	29 (52)	50 (45)
Inherited from parents	11 (20)	16 (28)	27 (24)
Occupation through force	2 (4)	-	2 (2)
Acquisition of land by informal settlers in a sample of three cities			
	Proportion of informal settlers acquiring land		
	Jimma city (n = 60)	Bahir Dar city (n = 186)	Debre Tabor (n = 1000)
Allocated by the municipality	28	-	49
Bought from farmers	-	29	-
Bought from speculators	-	16	31
Inherited/gift	23	11	2
Occupation through force	48	44	14
Compensation	-	-	2
Other	-	-	2

## Definition:

- Pertes and Hole, (2005) point to the failure of economic agents to adhere to established institutional rules
- Mooya and Cloete, (2010:438) point to elements of illegal acquisition of housing properties and/or land, selling, leasing, and other forms of illegal transfers

Number of land parcels registered and have site plans in Masha town<sup>1</sup>

Year	2004	2005	2006	2007
Number of land parcels registered	1953	2001	2064	2101
Registered land parcels with a site plan	39	27	31	15
Land parcels without a site plan	1914	1074	2033	2086
% land parcels with site plan	2	1.3	1.5	0.7
% land parcels without site plan	98	98.7	98.5	99.3

Use of standard/accepted designs by home owners in Abarminch town in 2008 (n = 381 home owners)

Design category	No. of home owners	Proportion (%)
Standard/accepted design	160	46.1
Not standard/Unaccepted design	181	53.9

Registered and unregistered land parcels in a sample of three towns (2008)

	Abbiy Addi <sup>2a</sup>	Abbiy Addi <sup>2b</sup>	Nekemte <sup>3</sup> (n=15)	Masha <sup>4a</sup>	Masha <sup>4b</sup>
Number (%) of land parcels registered	1597 (77)	2136 (68)	4 (27)	1328 (74)	773 (84)
Number (%) of land parcels unregistered	466 (23)	996 (32)	11 (73)	349 (26)	121 (16)

1 =Municipality of Masha. 2007.

2 = Abiy Addi Municipality, 2008: a = old occupation/registration; b = new allocation/obligatory registration.

3 = Based on informal settler survey, 2008

4 = Municipality of Masha (Finance Department), 2008: a = Residential land plots; b= Business land plots

Table 2. Forms of land acquisition in selected cities and/or towns (2008)

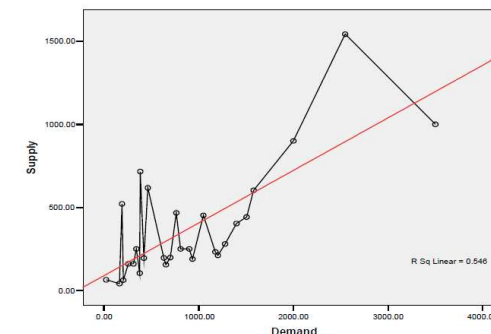


Figure 2. Relationship between residential land Demand and Supply in a sample of five Ethiopian towns and/or cities. NB: Data drawn from independent sample statistics gathered during the period between 1994 to 2008

# RESPONSE OPTIONS

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graph TD; A[RESPONSE OPTIONS] --> B[laissezfaire]; A --> C[coercion]; A --> D[co-optation];
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## laissezfaire

Taking no action. A business as usual strategy. responsible authorities consciously or unconsciously ignore the challenges posed by housing informality either due to lack of capacity to tackle the problems or failure to explicitly recognize the problem in terms of its scale, intensity and severity.

## coercion

All forms of legal and/non legal measures that result in the forceful eviction of illegal settlers. In most towns and cities of Ethiopia, this approach has often been in the form of bulldozing of illegal structures and the use of the law and the courts to evict illegal settlers.

## co-optation

All forms of collaborative efforts that seek to bring on board all parties affected by housing informality problem so that a solution is found through mutual co-operation. Other forms of embracing informal dwellers such as informal settlement upgrading schemes, and relocation to newly constructed houses or serviced parcels of land would also fall under this category. Specific strategies adopted include the regularization of informal settlements, through issuance of titles.

<b>City/town</b>	<b>Response option (s)</b>	<b>Perceived performance and/or challenges</b>
<b>Addis ababa/bole subcity / Yeka subcity/Kofle subcity</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- bulldozing/demolition of illegal structures</li> <li>- use of law and the courts to ensure compliance</li> <li>- Engagement of self help and religious organization in providing minimum standards in illegal settlements.</li> <li>- 33 000 condominium housing units constructed</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- A single campaign launched in Yeka subcity in 1994 EC costed the authorities an equivalent of 78 736 birr.</li> <li>- 13440 illegal houses in Addis Ababa have been demolished.</li> <li>- The demolition attracted resistants and anger among the affected.</li> <li>- Most beneficiaries are not informal settlers but rather people in high income brackets.</li> </ul>
<b>Adama city</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Demolition of illegal structures (carried 3751 demolitions within a single 5 year period).</li> <li>- Regularization of informal land/formalization of security of tenure (implemented in Kebele 3).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The demolished structures were soon replaced by fresh ones.</li> <li>- Regularization resulted in more informality.</li> </ul>
<b>Jimma city</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Eviction</li> <li>- Demolition of illegal structures</li> <li>- Legalization of squatter settlements</li> <li>- Threat of eviction</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Regularization of squatter settlements attracted more informal settlers.</li> <li>- Because the demolition of illegal structures is not done consistently, affected families tend to re-assemble and start all over again.</li> <li>- Eviction in some cases led to social and political strife.</li> </ul>
<b>Bahir Dar</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Threat of eviction</li> <li>- Eviction</li> <li>- Demolition of illegal structures (up-scaled in 1995 in Kebeles 11 and 13).</li> <li>- no action</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Not evaluated and therefore not known.</li> </ul>
<b>Ambo town</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- demolition of illegal structures (Demolished1050 housing units)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Has not brought desired results</li> </ul>
<b>Masha town</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- litigation/mediation by the municipality</li> <li>- Use of law and the courts (between the period August 1/ 1997 and May 10/2000EC, 412 land related cases were filed in courts.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Use of law and courts not effective. Of the 412 case filed only 22.5% were settled.</li> <li>- Delays in other parts of the judiciary proceedings a big challenge.</li> </ul>

Table 3. A snippet of institutional response options adopted by a sample of 5 cities and/or towns and perceived performances.



# The Condominium Housing project

Regions	1999EC.		2000		2001		2002		2003	
	number of cities	number of houses	number of cities	number of houses	number of cities	number of houses	number of cities	number of houses	number of cities	number of houses
Oromia	11	9020	14	12628	18	18040	23	27060	66	66748
Amhara	7	6710	10	9394	13	13420	18	20130	48	49654
Tigray	5	4070	7	5698	9	8140	12	12210	33	30118
Diredawa	1	1650	1	2310	1	3300	1	4950	1	12210
Harar	1	1100	1	1540	1	2200	1	3300	1	8140
Addis Ababa	1	33000	1	38500	1	55000	1	66000	1	192500
Total	33	60500	43	77000	55	60500	72	148500	194	396000

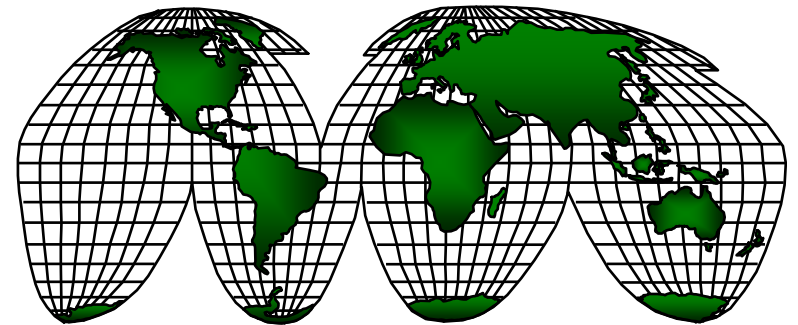
Table 4. Condominium housing units in selected regions of Ethiopia.





# Concluding remarks

- Approaches to housing informally in third world countries have undoubtedly been shaped by globalization induced best practices and other forms of views transplanted from peculiar circumstances that characterize the North.
- The widespread adoption and application of such 'universal' prescriptions has almost become synonymous with the 'new normal' world that all developing countries aspire to achieve.
- The analysis has argued that this 'new normal' perspective has unfortunately become a syndrome that is unwittingly at odds with the reality of socio-spatial dynamics and practices in cities and regions of the third world countries.
- This analysis is premised on the thesis that, important shifts and new ideas are worth noting but are nevertheless, no –readymade solutions for Southern contexts (Watson, 2009).



# Concluding remarks

- Response options to the emerging informalization process from state and local authorities in Ethiopia have taken a variety of forms.
- These have often ranged from laissez-faire and co-optation to coercion.
- Irregardless of the response option adopted, the resultant scenario has often taken two forms. On one hand it has resulted in isolation and resistance and on the other it has resulted in partnerships, cooperation and mutual problem solving.
- The paper argues that only the path that creates co-operation, partnerships and mutual problem solving is ideal in dealing with housing informality in Ethiopia.



**THANK YOU!!!**