Cities of Integrity:
Urban Planning and Corruption in Africa

Corrupt planning decisions made today have long-term and often intractably negative impacts on a city's future. Urban planners play a pivotal role in fostering integrity in urban development as their professional realm straddles the worlds of both public administration and private development.

Compromising the public good for personal, professional, or political gains – also known as corruption – is a global challenge. The New Urban Agenda calls on all countries to 'promote capacity development programmes to help sub-national and local governments in financial planning and management, anchored in institutional coordination at all levels, including environmental sensitivity and anti-corruption measures.'

However, municipal officials, political decision makers, civil society advocates and built environment practitioners have very few practical tools that help them to better understand and effectively address urban planning corruption.

Urban planners are uniquely positioned to address corruption risks in urban development. Therefore the question of how we can ensure that urban planners act as a force for public good, is central to this research project.

Instead of testing standard anti-corruption measures we examine a rather under-explored, yet promising route, the activation and promotion of professional integrity and the professional structures that enable it. The insights generated through this research will be relevant for policy and practice across Africa and will inform broader integrity strategies that focus on professional communities and their professional bodies.

ACE GLOBAL INTEGRITY

Anti-Corruption Evidence

Research Programme

AFRICAN CENTRE FOR CITIES
urbanism from an african perspective

UKaid
from the British people

THE UNIVERSITY OF ZAMBIA
SERVICE AND EXCELLENCE

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RESEARCH & PLANNING

THE PROJECT

The project focuses on how professional communities of planners in South Africa and Zambia live up to their roles as drivers of integrity. The project takes a three-pronged approach illustrated here:

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Examine current integrity landscape in urban development and planning

Build on a mapping of existing mechanisms and practices to develop, promote and enforce integrity as a professional norm

Identify public roles and responsibilities practicing planners in South Africa and Zambia see for themselves, as well as the pressures they face at the intersection of the public and private sector

A qualitative action experiment built around a targeted training intervention for planners in Zambia, including a feedback mechanism that surfaces and harnesses different and potentially conflicting expectations around the role, responsibilities and everyday practices of planners

THE TEAM

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR
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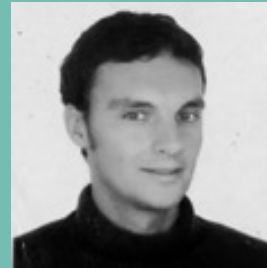
CO-PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR
Dr Gilbert Siame is a lecturer and researcher at the Department of Geography and Environmental Studies at the University of Zambia and the director of its Centre for Urban Research and Planning. He holds an MA and PhD in City and Regional Planning, both fromUCT.

RESEARCHER & PROJECT COORDINATOR
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SENIOR PROJECT ADVISOR
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