# Service Provision on the Zambian Copperbelt from an Economic History Perspective

# The Disjuncture between Economic Growth, Housing, Water and Energy Provision, 1940-2015

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In Kitwe, a city on the Zambian Copperbelt, there seems to be a disjuncture between patterns of economic growth or decline and levels of service provision. Whereas in times of economic boom standards in housing, water and energy would be expected to improve, this has not always proven to be the case. But neither have service levels simply deteriorated due to economic decline.1 A connection between urbanisation and economic development has been put forward in economic theory, urban studies and policymaking circles alike, yet in Kitwe this connection appears far from straightforward.<sup>2</sup> Scholars and policymakers complain about 'urbanisation without growth' in many African cities and lament the problems this brings in terms of overcrowded housing, poor infrastructure and informal settlements where population growth exceeds service delivery capacities.3 Yet the assumption that urbanisation will influence economic growth positively still remains largely unchallenged: 'It is striking how little attention is paid to the possibility that the character and composition of urbanisation may vary in different places, that diverse forms of economic growth can also occur, and that cities might influence growth in different ways.'4 It is therefore important to highlight that economic fluctuations and service provision are not causally linked. The case study of Kitwe, on the Zambian Copperbelt, can illustrate the varied linkages between urbanisation, infrastructure and economic development.<sup>5</sup> Historical research can give concrete examples of alternative development pathways and dynamics, as '[r]ecent research in social history and anthropology facilitates a reconsideration of the extremely uneven consequences of world economic history in Africa.'6 What have the driving forces behind service provision on the Zambian Copperbelt between 1940 and 2015 been, have they been economic, political or of a different nature?

From the 1930s onwards copper mining companies in Kitwe have been providing water, energy and housing to their employees as part of their salaries, at highly subsidised rates. In a stark contrast to this privileged position, non-mine employees had to fend for themselves and were at times even denied a right to reside in the city on a permanent basis. A discrepancy developed between high-standard services for mine employees and poor or even non-existent

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Ivan Turok, 'Linking Urbanisation and Development in Africa's Economic Revival', in: Susan Parnell and Edgar Pieterse (eds.), *Africa's Urban Revolution* (London and New York, 2014), 60-81; Olu Ajakaiye and Mthuli Ncube, 'Infrastructure and Economic Development in Africa: An Overview', *Journal of African Economies* 19:suppl.1 (2010), i3-i12.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Turok, 'Linking Urbanisation and Development', 60-62; Ambe J. Njoh, Urbanization and Development in Sub-Saharan Africa', *Cities* 20:3 (2003), 167-174.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Sean Fox, 'Urbanisation as a Global Historical Process: Theory and Evidence from Sub-Saharan Africa', in: Parnell and Pieterse (eds.), *Africa's Urban Revolution*, 257.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Turok, 'Linking Urbanisation and Development', 61.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> See especially: Miles Larmer and Alastair Fraser (eds.), *Zambia, Mining, and Neoliberalism: Boom and Bust on the Globalized Copperbelt* (New York and Basingstoke, 2010).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> Laurent Fourchard, 'Between World History and State Formation: New Perspectives on Africa's Cities', *Journal of African History* 52:2 (2011), 233.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> Emmanuel Mutale, *The Management of Urban Development in Zambia* (Aldershot and Burlington, 2004).

services for informal traders and other migrants.<sup>8</sup> Even in times of economic slump, such as in the late 1970s and 1980s when world copper prices fell and food and consumer goods were scarce due to stringent Structural Adjustment Programmes, housing, water and energy provided by the mines remained unaffected. Mining companies were forced to fire part of their staff, but those who remained could still rely on the same standard of services as previously.9 Paradoxically enough, the real rupture came with the privatisation of the mining companies on the Copperbelt from 1991 onwards, as the mines were no longer willing nor able to provide housing, water and energy for their employees. 10 Water and energy provision are now managed by commercial utilities, whereas mine housing has been sold to sitting tenants.<sup>11</sup> Service levels deteriorated in the 1990s and 2000s, and this situation remained unaltered even after 2004 when copper prices rose markedly.12 Today, residents of Kitwe's Wusakile mine township riot due to erratic water supply, whereas their neighbours in informal settlements enjoy running water from their taps – a strange reversal of fortunes.<sup>13</sup> Does this reversal of fortunes say something about the broader political economy of the Zambian state, the importance of mining within the state and unequal power relations within society?<sup>14</sup> I aim to study the disjuncture between economic fluctuations and service levels on the Copperbelt from a historical perspective, in order to contribute to debates about economic history and infrastructure in Kitwe and on the Zambian Copperbelt more generally.

A study of housing, water and energy provision in Kitwe from 1940 to 2015 can challenge existing ideas about service provision, privatisation, economic growth and decline. Studying service provision and infrastructure through the lens of political economy can yield insights about power relations within Zambia. Rather than leading to economic growth, privatisation of the mining companies in 1991 led to a deterioration in levels of service provision throughout the mining townships of Kitwe. This deterioration was not offset by patterns of economic boom after 2004. Whereas this boom did lead to new prosperity, it was concentrated in the informal settlements, rather than in the previously wealthy mining townships. What do patterns of infrastructure and service provision say about economic growth and state power? Mineworkers remain politically influential, so how come service provision is not catered for? Although the Zambian Copperbelt has been well researched, from a social as well as an economic history perspective (the Rhodes Livingstone Institute is the most marked example, but see also the more recent studies by James Ferguson and Miles Larmer) 16, levels of

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> See for example: Charles Perrings, *Black Mineworkers in Central Africa: Industrial Strategies and the Evolution of an African Proletariat in the Copperbelt, 1911-1941* (London etc., 1979).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> Mutale, *The Management of Urban Development*, 203-223.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>10</sup> Alastair Fraser and John Lungu, 'For Whom the Windfalls? Winners & Losers in the Privatisation of Zambia's Copper Mines', *Civil Society Trade Network of Zambia* (2007).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>11</sup> Barbara Mwila Kazimbaya-Senkwe and Simon C. Guy, 'Back to the Future: Privatisation and the Domestication of Water in the Copperbelt Province of Zambia, 1900-2000', *Geoforum* 38:5 (2007), 869-885

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>12</sup> Miles Larmer, 'Historical Perspectives on Zambia's Mining Booms and Busts', in: Fraser and Larmer (eds.), *Zambia, Mining, and Neoliberalism*, 50-55.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>13</sup> 'Wusakile Residents Fight with Police over Water Blues', *Zambian Watchdog* 11 October 2014, <a href="http://www.zambianwatchdog.com/wusakile-residents-fight-with-police-over-water-blues/">http://www.zambianwatchdog.com/wusakile-residents-fight-with-police-over-water-blues/</a> Accessed 8 June 2015.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>14</sup> As argued in the volume by Fraser and Larmer (eds.), Zambia, Mining and Neoliberalism.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>15</sup> Fraser and Lungu, 'For Whom the Windfalls'.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>16</sup> For a review article of Rhodes Livingstone Institute work, see: Hugh MacMillan, 'The Historiography of Transition on the Zambian Copperbelt – Another View', *Journal of Southern African Studies* 19:4 (1993), 681-712; James Ferguson, *Expectations of Modernity: Myths and Meanings of Urban Life on the Zambian* 

service provision have not been linked to patterns of economic growth before. Based on a variety of archival sources (National Archives of Zambia and Zambia Consolidated Copper Mines archives), oral interviews (conducted in 2010, 2014 and 2015) and secondary literature, this paper wishes to explore the ambiguous linkages between the services of water, housing and energy and patterns of long-term economic growth and decline.<sup>17</sup>

# 1940-1964: Migrant Labour and Urban Stabilisation

In the 1930s the settlement which was to become Kitwe started out as no more than a collection of grass huts. <sup>18</sup> The 1930s were a decade of quick transformation and R.J.B. Moore, a missionary and long-term resident on the Copperbelt, dramatically depicted that:

the "mushroom" growth of this copper rush involves some 30,000 uneducated tribal African labourers, swept up from all over a huge territory, herded together in improvised temporary compounds, and engaged in the erection of huge modern electrical and mechanical constructions, in the midst of what was until then the silent, untouched and inaccessible African forest.<sup>19</sup>

Moore went on to describe the squalid conditions of these earliest settlements, containing 'houses constructed chiefly of sticks and mud, with a minimum of furniture.'20 Yet as soon as commercial quantities of copper ore were found at Nkana mine (where the first shaft was sunk in 1928 and smelting commenced in 1932), the mining company (Anglo American) started erecting permanent houses for their European and African employees. A mining township developed close to Nkana mine, with brick and mortar houses, communal or individual flush toilets and electricity provision.<sup>21</sup> Housing and services were graded in different categories (from Category 1 to Category 7 or A1 to G4) and allocation depended on an employee's length of service, number of children and rank within the mine. Some houses were considered 'unsatisfactory' or even 'miserable', especially single accommodation and older houses, as the 'usual lay-out consists of rows of houses in straight lines, very often too close together, and in many cases open spaces are inadequate or absent.'22 Nonetheless, accommodation and services varied considerably in terms of quality, even within the mining areas. Housing ranged 'from ancient bush-and-pole mud huts, or sun-dried brick buildings, to well-built burnt-brick or concrete houses with small verandahs and kitchen attached.'23 One report acclaimed mine housing of being 'superior in construction to those in general provided by employers in the territory and those usually existing in native villages.'24 The most luxurious houses were threebedroomed, with a kitchen 'fitted with a sink; a shower and latrine are provided. These houses

*Copperbelt* (Berkeley, Los Angeles and London, 1999); Miles Larmer, *Mineworkers in Zambia: Labour and Political Change in Post-Colonial Zambia* (London etc., 2007).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>17</sup> This paper is based on very recent fieldwork (July-September 2015) and the archival material has not yet been fully processed. Although this paper will make references to archival sources, these references are not yet complete and could become much richer within the next few months. My apologies for presenting an incomplete paper because of this.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>18</sup> (NAZ) Kitwe District Notebooks.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>19</sup> R.J.B. Moore, *These African Copper Miners: A study of the Industrial Revolution in Northern Rhodesia, With Principal Reference to the Copper Mining Industry* (London, 1948), IX.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>20</sup> Moore, *These African Copper Miners*, 69.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>21</sup> Mutale, *The Management of Urban Development*.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>22</sup> Moore, *These African Copper Miners,* Appendix Report of a Commission Appointed to Enquire into the Administration and Finances of Native Locations in Urban Areas (1944), 140.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>23</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>24</sup> (NAZ) Report of the Commission Appointed to Inquire into the Disturbances in the Copperbelt, Northern Rhodesia, July 1940, 31.

are wired for electricity and provision is made for power points in each room and also for an electric cooker in the kitchen.'25 In general, the mining industry praised itself for having built 'whole towns, with all their services', and 'a special feature of these towns is the very large well-built, well-served and well-managed housing areas for African workers.'26

Next to the mining areas, a government township grew up, especially as the railway line was extended towards Kitwe in 1936 and secondary industries and services became concentrated in the town. In 1942 the Kitwe Location was erected with a government loan fund of £21,000. The government township contained solid houses, with water and sometimes even electricity facilities (mainly for street lights), which could not match the standard of housing and services provided by the mines to their employees, though.<sup>27</sup> Government housing was generally one-roomed, with floors of beaten earth, walls of sundried or burnt brick and corrugated iron or asbestos roofing.<sup>28</sup> Only formal and permanent employees of the government, such as teachers, civil servants and perhaps shopkeepers, building contractors or household servants would be allowed to live in the government townships. The 'pass' system officially barred those who were not formally employed from urban residence. This, however, did not prevent the increase in the numbers of 'unauthorised migrants' and 'squatters'. Even if the colonial government might have been opposed to urban 'stabilisation', especially of unemployed individuals, it 'had neither the will, nor the machinery, to control movements to town effectively.'29 Traders, carpenters and seamstresses were all an indispensable part of urban life. Even if urban authorities officially denied the existence of 'unauthorised migrants' there was little that could be done to prevent their arrival. Throughout the 1950s their presence was tolerated in peri-urban areas, facilitated by the hospitality of friends and relatives in town and even acknowledged in government reports. 'Unauthorised migrants' would either resort to co-habitation (i.e. mine marriages or living-in with friends or relatives who did have urban passes and access to housing) or to the erection of less permanent squatter housing at the edges of the urban settlement.<sup>30</sup> In terms of housing, electricity and water provision this caused a large discrepancy between formal (i.e. provided by the mines or the government) and informal housing and services. Whereas the former enjoyed high levels of infrastructure and good housing facilities, for example tin roofs, brick and mortar structures, communal taps or even in-house water connections, communal latrines or flush toilets, street lighting and reliable electricity provision, the latter category of housing had to do without such amenities.<sup>31</sup> A 1944 government report designated squatter housing as 'unhygienic and squalid in the extreme and their presence so near to the townships constitutes a menace to the public health.'32 This same report continued to state that most unauthorised houses were 'quite unsuited to urban conditions though a few are well-built and commodious', yet that most are 'of a very low standard and sanitation is non-existent'.33 Unauthorised settlements did not only have to fend for themselves in terms of housing and services, but even risked being demolished without prior notification. In terms of housing and

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>25</sup> (NAZ) Report of the Commission of Inquiry into the Mining Industry, Brown Report, 1966, 58.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>26</sup> (NAZ) First Report on a Regional Survey of the Copperbelt, 1959, 77.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>27</sup> Mutale, *The Management of Urban Development.* 

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>28</sup> (NAZ) L.W.G. Eccles, Report of the Commission Appointed to Inquire into the Administration and Finances of Native Locations in Urban Areas, 1944, 12.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>29</sup> MacMillan, 'Historiography of Transition', 684.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>30</sup> B. Anthony Kasongo and A. Graham Tipple, 'An Analysis of Policy towards Squatters in Kitwe, Zambia', *Third World Planning Review* 12:2 (1990), 147-165.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>31</sup> Mutale, *The Management of Urban Development.* 

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>32</sup> (NAZ) Eccles Report, 1.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>33</sup> (NAZ) Eccles Report, 13-14.

service provision a large gap thus developed during the colonial period between mine and government housing on the one hand and self-built unauthorised housing on the other hand.

After the Great Depression of the 1930s, and the experience of massive unemployment this brought, authorities were hesitant to promote 'permanent urbanisation' and constantly worried about the dangers of 'overurbanisation', fearing a larger urban population than the mines and government could support even in economically prosperous times. This resulted in 'government policy which opposed 'stabilisation' until the end of the Second World War, and maintained controls on movements to town, on urban residence, and house ownership, despite large scale house building, until the eve of independence.'34 Official opposition to 'permanent urbanisation' coincided with a period of practically uninterrupted expansion and boom of the mining industry from the late 1930s until independence, and even beyond.<sup>35</sup> Increased mining revenue was thus not automatically invested in infrastructural expansion or housing construction, even though most mining towns trebled their population numbers between 1946 and 1956.36 Although a number of new housing units were built in Kitwe – especially after the Second World War, a period called the 'Second Colonial Occupation' because of the vigorous focus on 'development' and relatively copious funding opportunities<sup>37</sup> - this was by far not enough to meet the growing demand and thus waiting lists kept growing. Accommodation meant for single men would be occupied by families with numerous children, whereas water and electricity facilities became grossly overburdened. Authorities complained that 'single roomed dwellings' meant for bachelors would be 'occupied by married couples with up to seven children'.38 The expansion of mining activities 'without a corresponding supply of houses to meet the needs of growing populations', resulted in 'overcrowding and creation of slum conditions.'39 Due to a lack of large scale housing construction programmes a serious shortage of married accommodation developed during the 1940s and 1950s.<sup>40</sup> Jane Parpart has described the difficulty of female residence in towns: 'Since housing was generally tied to formal employment, and very few women had such jobs, most women had to find a male partner in order to acquire housing.'41 Born out of convenience, (temporary) mine marriages developed, as it was easy to co-habitate on the mines even without formal marriage certificates. Women described 'getting a house' as the main aim of these marriages, as it offered 'women an opportunity to benefit from male employment and urban life.'42 Parpart stressed that there was a difference between women living in mining or government areas and those in other settlements: 'Women living in contractors' compounds and squatter compounds lived rather more grim lives, and no doubt had little access to (...) luxuries',43 such as curtains, bits of furniture or bedspreads. Even after numerous strikes on the Copperbelt, government and mining officials refused to provide better accommodation or facilities to women and children on

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>34</sup> MacMillan, 'Historiography of Transition', 695.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>35</sup> Employment on the mines reached a peak in the 1940s, and in the 1950s (despite good world copper prices and increasing revenues) employment levels dropped.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>36</sup> (NAZ) First Report on a Regional Survey of the Copperbelt, 1959, 76.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>37</sup> John Lonsdale, 'The European Scramble and Conquest in African History', in: Roland Oliver and G.N. Sanderson (eds.), *The Cambridge History of Africa Vol. 6* (1985), 680-766.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>38</sup> (NAZ) Eccles Report, 11.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>39</sup> (NAZ) Eccles Report, 19.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>40</sup> Moore, *These African Copper Miners*, 122.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>41</sup> Jane Parpart, "Where is your mother?": Gender, Urban Marriage, and Colonial Discourse on the Zambian Copperbelt, 1924-1945', *The International Journal of African Historical Studies* 27:2 (1994), 250.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>42</sup> Parpart, 'Where is your mother?', 253.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>43</sup> Ibidem.

the mines. Such deliberately limited social services were thought to discourage permanent African urbanisation and the problems this would allegedly bring along.<sup>44</sup>

This situation started to change in the 1950s, when there were widespread calls to improve housing and infrastructure on the Copperbelt. Church groups, welfare societies and Urban Advisory Councils, for example, lobbied 'for better housing, improved living standards, and wages that would enable "advanced" Africans to take their proper place in urban society.'45 Urban residents felt strongly that crowded housing and inadequate sanitary arrangements were undermining decent urban life. Slowly but systematically mining companies began improving living conditions for their workers and families, because they realised the importance of a stabilised and content workforce. The 1944 Eccles report concluded that 'the African in urban areas should be given good and permanent housing for himself and his family, [as] we have accepted the principle that the urbanisation of industrial workers should be encouraged.'46 Although investments were made to upgrade and improve mining and government housing and facilities after the Second World War, these investments did not seem to be triggered by economic boom, but rather by mining interests, political directives and government policies. Improvements were informed less by macro-economic shifts and more by the global political economy, colonial policy and existing societal needs:

It has not been sufficiently realised that the locations present a picture of gross overcrowding, that good housing in urban areas is an urgent necessity, and that the improvement of health which must result from better conditions in the locations will benefit not only the Africans living there, but the whole community.<sup>47</sup>

A contractual and legal component played a role as well. The Employment of Natives Ordinance, for instance, 'places upon the employer the obligation to provide his employee with proper housing.' Because 'every employee should receive a wage sufficient to enable him to maintain a reasonable standard of living above a mere subsistence level and to house himself and his family in accordance with the requirements of decency and hygiene.'48 In the long run, it was realised that 'good conditions for Africans in urban areas can only be achieved by the evolution of cheap and suitable types of housing.'49 Yet even if 'most Local Authorities have made real efforts to improve African housing in their locations, (...) and although standards have greatly improved the accommodation available is still quite inadequate both in quality and quantity.'50

During the colonial period, starting from the initial establishment of the settlement of Nkana-Kitwe in the 1930s until independence in 1964, housing, water and electricity services throughout the urban area were marked by great variation.<sup>51</sup> There was a difference between mining areas enjoying occasionally excellent facilities, government areas with often decent housing and service provision and unauthorised settlements where the conditions were generally bad and basic services often absent. But even within these different categories,

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>44</sup> Parpart, 'Where is your mother?', 259.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>45</sup> Parpart, 'Where is your mother?', 262.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>46</sup> (NAZ) Eccles Report, 1.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>47</sup> Moore, *These African Copper Miners*, 139. (October 1944 Report of a commission appointed to enquire into the administration and finances of native locations in urban areas).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>48</sup> (NAZ) Eccles Report, 3.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>49</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>50</sup> Ibidem, 5.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>51</sup> Mutale, *The Management of Urban Development.* 

facilities could vary. Single accommodation for miners could be overcrowded and could lack facilities, whereas some residents of unauthorised settlements could build high-quality brick and mortar houses. Despite a period of basically uninterrupted economic boom from the 1930s until 1964 housing facilities and water and energy services did not improve in tandem. Some new housing was built and in some areas water and energy services were improved, but this had more to do with certain government and mining policies and the lobbying of trade unions and urban residents, than with economic growth per se.<sup>52</sup> Moreover, the construction of new housing and facilities never managed to keep up with the rising demand. During the colonial period the official policy was to oppose 'permanent urbanisation', yet this stance did shift over time. Whereas in the 1940s pass laws were still rigidly enforced, in the 1950s and 1960s new housing facilities were erected and a more permanent population was tolerated, if not encouraged.<sup>53</sup> This change in policy was dictated as much by changing urban realities (more urban population) as by economic prosperity and caused some improvements in urban living conditions. Even though this trend was continued after independence, the rapid increase in urban population numbers caused serious housing shortages and inadequate services for urban residents.

## 1964-1975: Post-Independence Boom and Urban Growth

Post-colonial government policies, lifting colonial restrictions on mobility and relaxing regulations on urban residence, caused Zambia to 'reap the whirlwind'. Rural population flocked to the towns, because 'everyone wanted to come to urban areas in search of work, pleasure or even schooling.'<sup>54</sup> A 'surge in urban population (...) indisputably occurred in the years after independence' and although the independent government did engage in housing construction, the rapid influx of population caused waiting lists to grow and informal squatter settlements to mushroom. The change of government caused a 'greater tolerance of urban squatter settlements',<sup>55</sup> as after the transfer of power to the independent government:

a number of institutional changes (...) had made self-employment and survival outside the formal wage sector more feasible. These included the relaxation of controls on urban residence, and on land use in the Copperbelt's peri-urban areas. Increased incomes, and the dramatic post-independence shift of population into the towns, had created new opportunities for informal employment. The relaxation of controls made activities such as market-gardening, charcoal burning, beer brewing, and peddling, much easier. The abandonment of the attempt to control informal 'squatter' or 'shanty' settlements made cheap housing more available. <sup>56</sup>

Employment and residence outside of the formal mining and municipal areas became a rule rather than an exception after independence. Due to a boom in copper prices and increased labour union activity, the real incomes of mineworkers nearly doubled between 1963 and 1968, even if overall productivity had declined over that same period. Although the number of jobs on the mines had stopped growing in 1962, the rural-urban wage gap continued to widen, attracting even more migrants towards the towns and increasing the informalisation of employment and residence.<sup>57</sup> Because the growing population could not be accommodated

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>52</sup> See: Fraser and Larmer, Zambia, Mining, and Neoliberalism.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>53</sup> MacMillan, 'Historiography of Transition'.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>54</sup> (NAZ) HM77/PP/2, P.W. Matoka, A contribution to the Media Resource Center Freedom Forum, 8 November 1997 – Review of Zambia's 33 Years of Independence.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>55</sup> MacMillan, 'Historiography of Transition', 685.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>56</sup> MacMillan, 'Historiography of Transition', 705.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>57</sup> Fraser and Larmer, *Zambia, Mining, and Neoliberalism.* 

within existing formal urban areas, the gap between 'formal' and 'informal' housing and services – which had emerged during the colonial period – persisted and even widened.<sup>58</sup>

Differences in terms of service provision between mining areas, municipal areas and informal settlements persisted. Even though after independence 'the copper mining companies (...) [we]re no longer under any legal obligation to provide housing for their employees', the companies remained 'willing to continue to provide housing for their workers and to spend large sums in building new houses of improved standard.'59 Still, marked differences in service and quality between various forms of mine housing could be noted. Whereas housing in Category 1 was judged to be 'below minimum standards', lacking in windows and with communal toilet and washing facilities, housing in Category 3 consisted of three-roomed dwellings with a kitchen and individual outside latrines and ablutions.<sup>60</sup> Even though in general mine housing set 'a very high standard which the rest of the country may have difficulty in following', housing in Category 1 'falls far short of the barest minimum which the workers in the mining industry are entitled to expect from their employers.'61 Although housing in Category 1 might have been 'no worse, and in some respects better, than some of the housing provided by local authorities', it went against the principles of worker welfare which the mining companies adhered to. Mines argued 'that the "dominating factor" in their approach [to] housing and the provision of other social services is "enlightened self-interest".'62 The mining companies reckoned that in order to maintain a profitable industry they had to take responsibility for the welfare of their labour force, which was expressed through the provision of housing and social services.<sup>63</sup> Retired mineworkers fondly recall that the Zambia Consolidated Copper Mines (ZCCM) operated a 'cradle to grave' policy, which included replacing broken light bulbs and providing diapers to babies<sup>64</sup>: 'In all categories of housing the mining companies are responsible for repairs and maintenance and for the provision of electricity, water, street lighting and other community services.'65 Despite variations in quality, overall mine housing and services were thus of a high standard, enjoyed by a lucky few.

After independence local authorities did take up ambitious building programmes to cater for the increase in urban population. President Kaunda launched five year development plans, including plans for housing construction, water and sewerage provision and electricity expansion.<sup>66</sup> It was noted that one 'aspect of the Copperbelt towns as a whole is an extraordinarily rapid advance in the standards of living among many of the Africans (...) some have electrically-lit cottages, and schemes are afoot for home ownership.'<sup>67</sup> Despite these good conditions, there was a large and growing waiting list for all formal housing – mine and local authority housing – which was never resolved. In 1966 it was noted that Rhokana had 2,055 employees on the waiting list for mine high-density housing and single quarters were particularly overcrowded.<sup>68</sup> Access to formal housing could only be obtained by having a

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>58</sup> Mutale, *The Management of Urban Development*.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>59</sup> (NAZ), Brown Report, 56.

<sup>60 (</sup>NAZ) Brown Report, 57.

<sup>61 (</sup>NAZ) Brown Report, 60.

<sup>62 (</sup>NAZ) Brown Report, 56.

<sup>63</sup> MacMillan, 'Historiography of Transition'.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>64</sup> Interview with Mr. Banda, Mindolo Township, Kitwe, 14 August 2015.

<sup>65 (</sup>NAZ) Brown Report, 61.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>66</sup> (NAZ) First National Development Plan, Zambia, 1966.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>67</sup> (NAZ) First Report on a Regional Survey of the Copperbelt, 1959, 77.

<sup>68 (</sup>NAZ) Brown Report, 59.

permanent job and good connections, and thus formal housing remained inaccessible to the majority of casual migrants. Most urban residents, therefore, were dependent on informal settlements and their often poor facilities.

In the 1960s Zambia made its first plans for site and service schemes, which were intended as a solution to growing urban population numbers and squatter conditions. Whereas the local authority would provide a plot and basic facilities (such as a water connection, sewerage and roads), residents would be required to build houses for themselves without external assistance.<sup>69</sup> The settlements which would result were intended as 'formal settlements', composed of high-quality self-help buildings.<sup>70</sup> Although the aim of site and service schemes might have been laudable, progress on these schemes was very slow to materialise (most houses were only fully completed by the 1980s or 1990s) and these schemes could only ever cater for a small majority of urban residents. The motto of the Kitwe City Council 'Let us build us a city' reflected the strong predisposition towards formal housing development.<sup>71</sup> The council, however, 'failed to make any significant contribution to reducing the number of squatters either by legalising their existence or by resettling them to areas where they can afford to live in the formal sector.'72 Squatter areas continued to increase, containing 10,000 houses by 1974 – an amount equalling the new housing construction since independence of the mines and city council combined.<sup>73</sup> Despite their often vibrant economies and rapidly increasing population numbers, informal settlements (especially shanty compounds) were viewed as problems, rather than assets, in the 1970s. Although the government now tolerated informal settlements, which contained mixed populations of traders, repairmen and the unemployed, there was renewed talk of the destruction of unauthorised settlements after the Chona Commission of 1972. Despite the progressive language of 'upgrading', informal areas were viewed as nuisances.<sup>74</sup> Yet due to the inability of mining companies and local authorities to provide adequate housing and services, squatter settlements and compounds kept expanding after independence.

The decade after independence was marked by economic growth and an ambitious government commitment towards 'development', also of housing and infrastructure in Kitwe. Yet due to a widening rural-urban income gap and the lifting of official prohibitions on movement to town, urban population numbers surged and there was an official inability to provide housing and services to all these newcomers. This resulted in an increased 'informalisation' of urban areas and a widening gap in terms of service provision between mining and council areas on the one hand and informal areas on the other hand. Whereas economic growth and official efforts at development allowed the former areas to improve facilities and construct additional housing, there were no such provisions in the latter areas, which had to fend for themselves. Some ingenious residents of informal settlements managed to build large brick houses, but water services could simply not reach these areas yet. Apart from the opportunity to move to urban areas and make a living there, economic growth did not benefit casual migrants much in terms of housing and services. Site and service schemes

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>69</sup> Interview with Mrs. Irene Kayuni, Kitwe City Council, 23 November 2014.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>70</sup> See: Kasongo and Tipple, 'Analysis of Policy towards Squatters', 147.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>71</sup> Mutale, *The Management of Urban Development.* 

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>72</sup> Kasongo and Tipple, 'Analysis of Policy towards Squatters', 151.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>73</sup> Kasongo and Tipple, 'Analysis of Policy towards Squatters', 150.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>74</sup> MacMillan, 'Historiography of Transition'.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>75</sup> Larmer, 'Historical Perspectives'.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>76</sup> Mutale, *The Management of Urban Development.* 

initiated by the government could only reach a tiny minority and provided expensive housing with only moderate services. Labour union and other urban advocacy did put the paucity of housing and services on the agenda, but post-independence optimism coupled with a general lack of government funds and capacities prevented concrete steps from being taken.<sup>77</sup> Any developments which had taken place in the early 1970s were soon to be reversed due to severe economic crisis.

### 1975-1990: Copper Crisis, Unemployment and Informalisation

In 1975 the full impact of the collapse of copper prices and the oil crisis hit Kitwe. This resulted in a dramatic deterioration of the living standards of most urban Zambians, especially on the Copperbelt. Employment levels on the mines declined, resulting in a rapid informalisation of labour and high levels of unemployment. Due to this long-term cyclical down-turn in the world copper price, the Copperbelt Province's rate of population growth fell below the national average for the first time in the 1980s, although Kitwe's growth rate remained slightly higher than average. The days of intense population boom had passed, but still, urban residents and squatters did not just 'return' to rural areas, most were there to stay. For the population remaining in the city of Kitwe a severe polarisation in living conditions was the result of this economic crisis. Whereas mineworkers who were lucky enough to retain their contracts barely felt the economic crunch at all, residents in informal settlements had to queue for basic goods such as soap and cooking oil, whilst their overcrowded houses were regularly threatened with demolition. How did this polarisation come about and what were its practical effects?

Due to the drop in copper prices, Zambia's primary export commodity, and an overall decline in copper production, per capita income fell by more than 50 percent from 1974 to 1994.81 The copper industry was in crisis, numerous labourers were laid off and some mines closed down. Subsequent Structural Adjustment Programmes (mainly implemented in the 1980s) caused the:

devaluation of the currency and deregulation of foreign exchange, the removal of subsidies and price controls for food and other essential goods, the abandonment of government-guaranteed entitlements in the fields of health care and education, and the privatization of the major parastatal corporations, culminating in the selling off of the mines

from 1991 onwards.<sup>82</sup> This caused rising urban poverty, especially among the urban poor and unemployed. Mineworkers felt the crunch, undoubtedly, and some had to resort to skipping meals, yet the mines continued to provide a safety net to cushion the severe economic recession, at least for those who managed to retain their jobs.

Retired mineworkers, whom I interviewed in 2014/15, were surprised about the question whether they were affected by the economic crisis in the 1970s and 1980s. They responded by saying that others experienced food rationing and had to queue for cooking oil, but not them:

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>77</sup> Larmer, 'Historical Perspectives'.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>78</sup> Ferguson, *Expectations of Modernity*; Larmer, 'Historical Perspectives'.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>79</sup> MacMillan, 'Historiography of Transition'.

<sup>80</sup> Mutale, *The Management of Urban Development*.

<sup>81</sup> Ferguson, *Expectations of Modernity*, 6, Reference to World Bank Report 1996.

<sup>82</sup> Ferguson, *Expectations of Modernity*, 10.

The mines continued with their 'cradle to grave' policy and provided us with all our requirements. New houses continued to be built and we never experienced electricity or water shortages, everything was just the same as before. The real break came after the privatisation of the mines in 1991.83

A discrepancy in terms of service provision between mining, council and informal areas could be clearly noticed, particularly in the field of water provision: 'This is partly due to the fact that physical developments such as housing and water infrastructure, have a certain permanency, and gain (...) 'momentum', and are therefore difficult to alter.'<sup>84</sup> Water pipes and housing, once constructed, were not easy to alter and therefore mine housing continued to enjoy access to regular and reliable water provision throughout the economic crisis of the 1980s, remaining heavily subsidised by the mining companies. The mines, furthermore, continued to engage in the construction of new houses of high quality and standards. In a relative sense, the position of mine employees could still be regarded as privileged indeed, despite the economically bad performance of the mines themselves.<sup>85</sup>

The situation was quite different for residents of council areas. With regard to the water situation, the 1980s and 1990s were a time of decline. Access to adequate water supplies, technical problems, maintenance and poor water quality all proved problematic. Although there were piecemeal efforts to fix this situation, water remained unreliable and inadequate. The council even authorised residents to dig their own boreholes and wells, as long as these did not interfere with the supply pipes and sewerage network of the council. At the same time, urban poverty levels skyrocketed as policies of structural adjustment 'deliberately aimed to reduce urban living standards.' Because the council lacked money to engage in new construction activities, waiting lists remained long. Yet still, those in council housing enjoyed more privileges and better services (mainly because their residence in council areas was often tied to formal employment) than residents of informal self-built areas.

Although mine employees and council area residents were hard struck by the copper crisis, residents in informal areas – the majority of whom lacked formal employment – almost certainly had an even harder time. Even such basic necessities as food could be hard to get a hold of, let alone electricity or water supplies.<sup>88</sup> Shallow wells and communal latrines remained common, whereas housing materials were in short supply and housing quality consequently suffered. Nonetheless, there was an increased recognition by urban authorities that squatter settlements could be assets and sources of employment generation. Instead of being demolished, there were attempts to 'upgrade' such settlements, for example through site and service schemes, which could never satisfy the mounting demand for housing, though. By 1982 about one-third of Kitwe's population consisted of 'squatters'.<sup>89</sup> Due to financial stringency government and local authority funds equally shrunk, resulting in the lack of any development or upgrading work being undertaken.<sup>90</sup> Although there was some goodwill to 'upgrade' squatter settlements, hostility pervaded at the same time. Throughout the 1980s the worry about

<sup>83</sup> Interview with Mr. Phiri, Mindolo Township, Kitwe, 18 August 2015.

<sup>84</sup> Kazimbaya-Senkwe and Guy, 'Back to the Future', 882.

<sup>85</sup> Larmer, 'Historical Perspectives'.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>86</sup> Kazimbaya-Senkwe and Guy, 'Back to the Future', 877.

<sup>87</sup> Ferguson, *Expectations of modernity*, 10.

<sup>88</sup> Interview with Mr. Julius Phiri, Ipusukilo Compound, 23 August 2015.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>89</sup> Kasongo and Tipple, 'Analysis of Policy towards Squatters', 150.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>90</sup> Kasongo and Tipple, 'Analysis of Policy towards Squatters', 158.

'overurbanisation' and excess population remained. There was as yet no realisation by urban authorities that Kitwe's population was there to stay, even in economically difficult times, and that urban services had to be provided for them.<sup>91</sup>

In the 1980s, Kitwe suffered from a severe economic recession, which hit the informal areas particularly hard. Mining employees who managed to retain their contracts were less hard struck, and for them housing, water and energy provision appeared almost unaffected by economic downturn. Council areas, although they suffered from a lack of funds, struggled to retain previous levels of housing, services and infrastructure. The polarisation between mine, council and informal settlements, which had set in during the colonial period, merely deepened. Levels of service provision during this period appeared to be dictated not by economic trends, but by the resources and policies of the mining companies and the city council. Individuals, however, also had some power to influence the course of events. Entrepreneurial residents could build good housing in informal settlements and could make a living for themselves as traders or artisans, whereas mineworkers could suffer from low salaries or a lack of funds after retiring. It is therefore important to pay attention to the variations which remained in place due to historical contingencies.<sup>92</sup>

## 1990-2015: Privatisation, Commercialisation, Economic Growth and Polarisation

From 1991 onwards, with the transition from the UNIP (United National Independence Party) to the MMD (Movement for Multiparty Democracy) government and a multiparty system, and as a result of further Structural Adjustment Programmes, the mines were gradually privatised. Even though this took long to materialise, by 2000 most of the mines had been sold off to private companies.<sup>93</sup> In tandem, the provision of water and electricity services had been commercialised and the mines no longer took responsibility for providing such services to their own employees. This resulted in the formation of the Nkana Water and Sewerage Company, which started operations in 2000 and the Zambia Electricity Supply Company (ZESCO) which took over electricity provision from the mines in the course of the 1990s. This commercialisation had a large impact on mineworkers, in particular.94 Whereas previously they had received water and electricity services free of charge or at highly subsidised rates as part of their salaries, they now had to start paying for these services at commercially viable fees. This resulted in the nonpayment of bills, arrears and illegal water connections, which caused service levels to deteriorate, as the commercial utilities did not have the money to maintain water, sewerage and electricity services properly<sup>95</sup>: 'The local authority has not been able to adequately cover for the services previously provided by the mine. Particularly the charging of rents for electricity and water supplies has led to serious hardship for residents, and to resistance against fees.'96 Old pipes were not replaced and electricity provision was barely modernised, causing a deterioration in formal service provision in mine areas for the first time since independence. Furthermore, mine housing was sold to sitting tenants, some of which sold this housing on to

<sup>91</sup> MacMillan, 'Historiography of Transition'.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>92</sup> Larmer, 'Historical Perspectives'; Mutale, *The Management of Urban Development.* 

<sup>93</sup> Larmer, 'Historical Perspectives'.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>94</sup> See: Iva Pesa, 'Can Frugal Innovation be Inclusive Innovation? The Institutional Dynamics of Low-Cost Water and Housing on the Zambian Copperbelt', *African Journal of Science Technology Innovation and Development*, forthcoming.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>95</sup> Interviews with residents in Wusakile Township, 2014 and interview with Nkana Water and Sewerage Manager Mrs. Diana Makwaba, 2015.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>96</sup> Fraser and Lungu, 'For whom the Windfalls', 39.

others or started renting out rooms to tenants, whilst others poorly maintained their houses and facilities deteriorated as a result.<sup>97</sup> Whereas during the 1990s the Zambian economy still did not perform very well, from 2004 onwards a period of renewed boom occurred, yet this did not do much to improve service levels in mining areas.<sup>98</sup> On the other hand, the economic boom period has caused facilities in some informal areas to improve markedly. Some residents are building large houses, are laying pipes to connect their houses to the water network and are gaining access to the electricity grid for the first time.<sup>99</sup> Commercialisation and privatisation have, in some respects, reversed the existing polarisation between formal and informal areas. Whereas housing and service provision in the mining areas has deteriorated, informal areas are experiencing an unprecedented boom.

Retired mineworkers recalled how during ZCCM days they never used to experience any problems of power outages or irregular water supply, but today these are common. Mineworkers detested having to pay bills for utilities they had previously received free of charge, and the resulting arrears caused the commercial utilities to downsize the services provided to mining areas. <sup>100</sup> In the mine township of Wusakile, problems with water reached a peak in October 2014, when water would be available to some residents for only 30 minutes each day. This caused vocal protests in the media and local riots against Nkana Water and Sewerage Company:

We the residents of Wusakile constituency should not be treated as third class citizens. We are not happy with the manner water is supplied to our area. $^{101}$ 

Police in Kitwe (...) fought running battles with Wusakile residents due to lack of water in the ghetto. Hundreds of Wusakile residents demonstrated in the heavily populated Copperbelt Township denouncing the PF [Patriotic Front] government over lack of water. Some residents complained that they had had no water for many days, and even when there is water running in taps, it is rationed without any reason. Others also complained about the continued electricity blackouts when the PF promised all these will be things of the past if they win. 102

What is striking about these excerpts is, first of all, that Wusakile is referred to as a ghetto – even if it used to be a privileged and highly developed area from the 1940s until the 1990s – whereas its residents complain about being 'third class citizens'. Secondly, water provision is not so much linked to the economy, but is seen as a political matter – the ruling party had promised water provision would be taken care of once they came into power, but obviously they did not manage to keep this promise, causing residents to feel entitled to riot. The lack of reliable water provision in Wusakile sparked heated political protests, addressing issues of equity and citizenship rights. Disillusionment in Wusakile has been aggravated because informal areas, such as Racecourse Compound, have been enjoying reliable water services and have recorded an increase in individual water connections. It was this reversal of fortunes, more than economic hardship per se, which caused such violent protests in Wusakile.<sup>103</sup>

<sup>97</sup> Interviews in Wusakile (2014) and Mindolo (2015).

<sup>98</sup> Larmer, 'Historical Perspectives'.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>99</sup> Interviews in Ipusukilo (2015); Mutale, *The Management of Urban Development*.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>100</sup> Interviews with retired mineworkers in Wusakile (2014) and Mindolo (2015).

<sup>101</sup> Wusakile MP Richard Musukwa, *The Post* 27 October 2014 http://postzambia.com/news.php?id=3351

 $<sup>^{102}\</sup> Zambian\ Watchdog,\ 11\ October\ 2014\ http://www.zambianwatchdog.com/wusakile-residents-fight-with-police-over-water-blues/comment-page-1/$ 

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>103</sup> Compare this to: Larmer, 'Historical Perspectives'.

Housing in mining areas has also changed markedly during this period. Once mine housing had been sold off to sitting tenants, some proved unable to upkeep their houses to the same extent as ZCCM had been able to. Some house owners were not able to execute routine repairs or even to paint their houses. 104 Others, however, could raise the financial means to buy their house from ZCCM (the buying price was mainly deducted from pensions and other accumulated benefits) but thereafter struggled to make a living. This resulted in either selling the house to outsiders, or building 'cabins' and renting out rooms to relatives or outsiders. 105 Whereas during ZCCM days strict building regulations had applied, whereby residents were not entitled to erect any structures in their yards or gardens, building activities now became commonplace. House owners would build various structures, renting out their main house or newly built and more impermanent structures to tenants as a source of additional income. This also strained the water and electricity provision capacity in mining areas, because the pipes and cables which had been meant for a single household now had to accommodate several households at once. When questioned what, according to residents, the main reasons for the deteriorated situation throughout Wusakile Township were, they replied that it was overcrowding coupled with a political unwillingness to provide services. 106 Yet mineworkers remain politically influential in Zambian national politics and their voices influence voting behaviour and can therefore not simply be silenced. 107 At the same time housing and service provision from the start of the copper boom in 2004 until today have not improved, but have rather deteriorated.

Council areas have experienced mixed fortunes over this same period of time. Whereas much building has occurred in council areas - where plots of land have been sold to sitting tenants as well, causing the freedom to build without adhering to strict council regulations similar problems with erratic water and electricity supply have been experienced as in the mining areas.<sup>108</sup> Commercial utilities proved unable to supply the council areas and the mining areas, as well as providing limited services to the informal areas. This resulted in water shortages and electricity blackouts, coupled with a simultaneous construction boom.<sup>109</sup> The council continues to adhere to strict building standards, but residents do not always follow these, especially if they own the plots themselves. The council formally stipulates that only burnt brick and concrete blocks should be used for construction, whereas all houses should have piped water instead of using latrines and shallow wells. Yet not all households manage to meet these stringent standards, and shallow wells and latrines remain a reality in most areas. Many residents have built extensions to their main houses and chicken runs and workplaces have sprung up everywhere. 110 This construction boom, however, was modest compared to the informal areas, where population numbers have surged and services have improved for the first time since independence.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>104</sup> Interviews with residents in Wusakile (2014).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>105</sup> Interviews with residents in Mindolo (2015).

 $<sup>^{106}</sup>$  Interviews with residents in Wusakile (2014), Mindolo (2015) and interview with Technical Manager Nkana Water and Sewerage Company Mr. Chenshe, November 2014.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>107</sup> Larmer, 'Historical Perspectives'.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>108</sup> Interviews with residents in Chimwemwe Township, 2015.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>109</sup> Kazimbaya-Senkwe and Guy, 'Back to the Future'.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>110</sup> Interview with Mrs. Irene Kayuni, Kitwe City Council Housing Manager, November 2014.

Whereas Kitwe had a population of 86,000 in 1957, this number rose to 338,207 in 1990 and is estimated to be 522,092 in the 2010 census.111 Kitwe's population has thus witnessed a dramatic increase over the last 20 years. Most of this population increase has been accommodated within Kitwe's informal settlements, which now number 35 in total.<sup>112</sup> Even though some residents of informal settlements still complain about being forgotten by the council and even if informal settlements are regularly threatened with demolition, they have witnessed much development in terms of housing, water and energy provision.<sup>113</sup> Some politically influential and old-established informal settlements have now been recognised for 'upgrading' by the Kitwe City Council, which means that the council will build roads and provide water and electricity connections if residents rebuild their houses themselves according to council standards. Yet upgrading is a slow process and many informal areas remain unrecognised by the city council.<sup>114</sup> Entrepreneurial residents have built themselves six bedroomed concrete block houses, with in-house water and electricity connections and flush toilets. They have profited from the economic boom and from relaxed building regulations to improve their living conditions. Still, other informal area residents remain less well-off. In the area of Ipusukilo residents complain that population numbers have increased, whereas services and housing have not. Most residents rely on renting their houses, without any prospects of ever owning these houses, whereas electricity and running water is only enjoyed by a small minority.<sup>115</sup> Still, in many informal areas electricity connections and individual household water connections are increasing. Whilst the commercial utility, Nkana Water and Sewerage Company, has constructed water kiosks - where customers can buy water in 20 liter containers - these are barely used because residents prefer their own shallow wells or draw water from their neighbours who have taps in their yards or houses. Despite the erratic water supply in Wusakile, areas such as Racecourse Compound experience regular water supplies – at least if residents are able and willing to pay for their water connections and consumption. 116

Privatisation and commercialisation of service provision have not automatically caused any economic rationalisation or improvement in service provision. To the contrary, privatisation and commercialisation have caused a deterioration in levels of service provision in mine townships. On the other hand, service levels have improved in informal settlements but this has been due to the entrepreneurial spirit of individual residents and does not hold true for all areas. 117 Economic growth after 2004 has not proven beneficial to mine and council residents, but some people in informal settlements have been able to benefit. This has caused a reversal of fortunes, a change in the dominant power relationship between mine and council areas on the one hand, and informal settlements on the other hand, which had been so entrenched since the colonial period. Today, some informal settlements are better off than mining townships such as Wusakile are. Wusakile residents blame this on politics, and evidently the reason is not purely economic. Economic patterns have influenced housing and service provision throughout Kitwe's

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>111</sup> Mutale, *The Management of Urban Development*, Zambia CSO.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>112</sup> John Kangwa, 'Zambia: 'Having a Place of Your Own' in Kitwe', in: Robert Home and Hilary Lim (eds.), *Demystifying the Mystery of Capital: Land Tenure and Poverty in Africa and the Caribbean* (London, 2004), 121-143.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>113</sup> Interviews in Ipusukilo, 2015.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>114</sup> Interview with Mrs. Irene Kayuni, Kitwe City Council, Housing Manager, November 2014.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>115</sup> Interview with Mr. Julius Phiri, Ipusukilo, 2015.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>116</sup> Interview with Mr. Chenshe, Technical Manager Nkana Water and Sewerage Company, 2014.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>117</sup> Compare with: Larmer, 'Historical Perspectives'.

Iva Peša, 'Service Provision on the Zambian Copperbelt from an Economic History Perspective'

history, but other factors have to be taken into account to understand the fluctuating and erratic history of housing and service provision.

#### Conclusion

This paper has explored the rough outlines of the history of housing, water and electricity in the city of Kitwe, linking this to patterns of economic growth and decline. As Miles Larmer has argued: 'historical evidence suggests that there has never been a direct or causal relationship between the fortunes of the mining industry on the one hand and the general prosperity' of Kitwe's citizens on the other. 118 Yet if economic fluctuations and mining booms and busts have not determined housing and service provision in Kitwe, what has? The nature of the mining industry itself and political factors play a role. Shifting power relations in society, which caused mineworkers to be powerful and influential in one period, could cause mineworkers to lose power in a later period. Yet individual agency equally has to be factored in, as households can construct good houses in informal areas and mining areas alike. As Alastair Fraser has argued: 'All has not been well during the booms, and the busts offer opportunities for some and costs for others.'119 This applies to the history of housing, water and electricity in Kitwe, as during the economic recession of the 1980s mining areas fared well - whilst during the economic boom after 2004 mining areas did not profit as much. As Garth Myers has argued, in order to understand an African city, attention needs to be paid to history, geography and relationships with state power, next to economic factors. 120 A historical study can be attentive to such factors, which can in turn inform debates about urban sustainability, welfare and equity. In this manner, attention can be paid to 'how societies can configure their own, unique and self-defined pathways to achieve locally defined social and political goals, even in a globalizing world.'121 The unpredictable historical development of housing, water and energy in Kitwe provides insights into patterns of economic growth and decline, but also into power relations within the Zambian state, political hierarchies and individual agency.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>118</sup> Larmer, 'Historical perspectives', 32.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>119</sup> Fraser, 'Introduction: Boom and Bust on the Zambian Copperbelt,' in: Fraser and Larmer (eds.), *Zambia, Mining, and Neoliberalism*, 2.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>120</sup> Garth Myers, 'The Social Construction of Peri-Urban Places and Alternative Planning in Zanzibar', *African Affairs* 109:437 (2010), 582.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>121</sup> Edgar Pieterse, 'Recasting Urban Sustainability in the South', *Development* 54:3 (2011), 311.