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## Urban Poverty in Southern Africa (UPISA)

### Project Framework

Poverty is a major problem in rural and urban areas in southern Africa. Although the nature and characteristics of urban and rural poverty differ, their roots and causes are closely intertwined. Recent urbanisation trends are expected to cause an increase in urban poverty. In the academic world, however, the multidimensional phenomenon of poverty has so far received less attention in urban than in rural context.

### Major Contents and Objectives

The realities of the urban poor are the main focus of research. Special emphasis is put on the assessment of livelihoods of different social groups in impoverished neighbourhoods/poor living environments. The project aims at establishing a basis for the assessment of poverty in different urban contexts and shall contribute to the debate about definitions and measures of poverty.

The project contributes to:

1. a better understanding of the predominant dynamics and processes of urban poverty in general
2. a better understanding of local manifestations of poverty in Maputo and eThekweni (Durban)
3. the identification of local conditions for policy making and planning on a municipal level.

An overall goal is to facilitate discussions and exchange of knowledge and experience between local and international actors on different levels in the sense of a South-South and North-South dialogue. This cooperation shall take place on a scientific level as well as with stakeholders from governmental and non-governmental organisations.

### Theoretical Background and Methods

The analysis of the local context will be based on the Sustainable Livelihoods Approach. Initially designed for rural areas a growing number of studies suggest its application on urban areas. The empirical work in this project aims at making valuable contributions to this debate and at establishing a long term basis for poverty monitoring processes.

The methodological approach is a qualitative one that is open to adaptations according to local contexts. The empirical research will consist of a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods.

## **Project Locations**

The project consists of a comparative study between the cities of *Maputo*, Mozambique and *eThekweni (Durban)*, South Africa. The two cities have been chosen due to their distinct levels of urbanisation and their different socio-political background.

*eThekweni (Durban)* is the second largest municipality in South Africa and forms a post-apartheid metropolis with approximately one third of the population living in informal settlements and 40% of households being classified as poor. *Maputo*, the capital city of Mozambique is experiencing economical upturn. The majority of the population, however, is not able to participate in this development but suffers from precarious living conditions in a city that is changing rapidly under the pressure of many different socio-political influences.

## **Project Director**

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Main focus of research: Sustainable  
Livelihood Approach, Gender, Migration

Main focus of research: Poverty alleviation  
Policies, Economy

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