

**‘VENDORS KEEP THIS ECONOMY RUNNING’: ECONOMIC INFORMALISATION AND
CITIZENSHIP IN HARARE, ZIMBABWE**

The thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements

for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

by

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Hilary Term 2021

Word count: 98,700



[T]he country had become a nation of informal traders.

– Petina Gappah, An Elegy for Easterly (2009)

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THESIS ABSTRACT

The thesis offers a theoretical and empirical account of how and why ideas and practices of citizenship have changed under the impact of economic informalisation in urban Zimbabwe. This issue is critical as it sheds light on the changing relationships between individuals, who had to shift from the formal sector to the informal and political and civic actors. The thesis challenges and expands the existing literature on citizenship in Africa and Zimbabwe specifically by focusing on economic informalisation as a core transformation in the economic and political life of the country that has led to changes in people's understandings and experiences of citizenship. It does so by looking at grassroots notions of citizenship as opposed to government definitions; by considering the impact of associational life in the informal sector on the understanding and practices citizenship; and by tracking subtle changes in people's understanding of productivity, taxation, employment, and residence as key notions of citizenship under the impact of economic informalisation. It focuses on the 2013–2018 period, although it refers to economic and political developments in Zimbabwe from the colonial period onwards to explore their implications for citizenship in the urban informal sector. The thesis argues that economic informalisation in Zimbabwe has led to a great divide between the modernist thinking and survivalist reality, which has shaped politics at all levels and, accompanied by other socio-political and economic processes has significantly affected the political terrain of the country. On the individual level, the modernist thinking–survivalist reality disconnect has led to changes in political behaviours of informal sector actors. Individuals started disengaging from the state and the city and entering new debates about the nature of citizenship, engaging in associational life in the informal sector, shaping distinct notions and practices of lived citizenship relevant to their economic reality.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank my supervisor Prof Jocelyn Alexander for her continuous support and guidance during my master's and doctoral studies. Her strong encouragement and constructive criticism of my research and writing were invaluable in my academic progression. Under her supervision, I have grown and matured as a scholar and developed my own thinking and academic identity.

When I just entered the University of Oxford, I was privileged to be supervised by Prof Abdul Raufu Mustapha who always supported my enthusiasm for African Politics and mentored me during my master's studies. I am most grateful for his support, intellectual guidance and contribution to my academic growth.

I would like to thank my academic mentor Dr Jean Debarros for his support and advice during my doctoral studies. I truly appreciate that he was a part of my studies during the most challenging times and encouraged me to carry on.

I greatly appreciate feedback, comments, criticism and thought-provoking questions on my research which I have received from many academics throughout my studies, including Prof Brian Raftopoulos, Dr Sara Rich Dorman, Prof Indrajit Roy, Prof Zaad Mahmood, Prof Miles Tendi, Prof Kate Meagher, Dr Ushehweu Kufakurinani, Dr Pius Nyambara, Dr Mark Nyandoro and Dr Bernard Kusena. I am particularly grateful to my Confirmation of Status examiners Prof Simukai Chigudu and Dr Dan Hodgkinson who supported my first steps in writing this thesis and whose insightful feedback helped me further develop it.

My research was only possible because of the kindness and generosity of my respondents. Many of them not only gave me insightful interviews but also helped me connect with other potential respondents, increasing my sampling. I am most grateful for their time, effort, courage, and willingness to share their experiences and opinions with me.

During my fieldwork, many people helped me with identifying respondents and data

sources. I would like to thank Dr Munyaradzi Gwisai and Dr Ushehvedu Kufakurinani for pointing out the potential of the analysis of Zimbabwean dancehall songs for my research. I am most grateful to Dr McDonald Lewanyika, Dr Godfrey Kanyenze, Dr Phillip Pasirayi, George Makoni, Dr Selina Pasirayi, Dr Arnold Chamunogwa, and Innocent Kasiyano for their assistance and advice during fieldwork. I would like to thank those who assisted me during my fieldwork as guides and interpreters – Gabriel, Mairos, Rose and Favor. They familiarised me with Mbare, Budiriro and Glenview and helped me talk to some respondents. My special thanks go to Peter who selected and translated into English Zimdancehall songs for my research. The fieldwork would have been much harder without the support and encouragement of Irene Staunton and Murray McCartney. They have always been very kind to me. I am also very grateful to Hope and Tafi Chigudu for their warm welcome and support. I would like to thank all those who made my stay in Harare warm and enjoyable – Adam, Craig, Emily, Sean, Kombo, Bongani, Kieren, Patricia, Brent, Abigail, Moreblessing, and Tendai. I am grateful to Amos who helped me move around the city. I would also like to thank Sergei Karamaev for his support and assistance during my stay in Zimbabwe.

During my studies, I received extensive support and advice from my fellow MPhil and DPhil students, especially those who did research on Zimbabwe. I am grateful to participants of the Southern African Discussion Group, especially Simukai Chigudu, Dan Hodgkinson, Arnold Chamunogwa, Susanne Verheul and Marc Howard for their feedback on my presentations and fieldwork advice. I am very grateful to Dr Zaad Mahmood for his friendship, support, encouragement and academic advice. Svetlana Pavlova, Emile Perkins, Ian Robertson, Dr Phyllis Ferguson and Alastair, my non-QEH Oxford friends, have also been very caring and supportive. I am thankful for their kind words and for being a part of my Oxford experience.

Queen Elizabeth House has been the best possible Department for my postgraduate studies. I would like to thank all those who made my experience there enjoyable and memorable, especially Dominique Attala without whom I cannot imagine our Department. I

am also most grateful to Penny Rogers and Gary Jones for their care and support.

College life was very important during my studies. I am grateful that I was a member of St Cross College and especially Green Templeton College, which was an amazing community. My College advisor, Prof Roger Zetter, was very supportive, and I appreciate his guidance and advice during my DPhil studies.

My studies in Oxford would not be possible without appropriate funding. I would like to thank the Hill Foundation, Queen Elizabeth House, St Cross College and Green Templeton College for their generous financial support.

My family has always been the ultimate source of love in my life. I would like to wholeheartedly thank my mum Olga, late grandpa Vyacheslav, grandma Larisa, and uncle Oleg for believing in and caring about me. I truly appreciate their never-ending emotional and financial support during all these years. My mum is the most important person in my life, and she devoted her life to helping me grow and thrive. I am dedicating this thesis to her.

ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

CBD	Central Business District
COVID-19	Coronavirus Disease 2019
ESAP	Economic Structural Adjustment Programme
GNU	Government of National Unity
HIV/AIDS	Human Immunodeficiency Virus Infection and Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome
ILO	International Labour Organisation
ISO	Informal Sector Organisation
LEDRIZ	Labour and Economic Development Research Unit Zimbabwe
MDC(-T)	Movement for Democratic Change(-Tsvangirai)
(M)SMEs	(Micro,) Small and Medium Enterprises
NANGO	National Association of Non-Governmental Organisations
NAVUZ	National Vendors' Union Zimbabwe
NCA	National Constitutional Assembly
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
SHDF	Self-Help Development Foundation
S(M)EDCO	Small (and Medium) Enterprise Development Corporation
UDI	Unilateral Declaration of Independence
VISET	Vendors' Initiative for Social and Economic Transformation
WIEGO	Women in Informal Employment: Globalising and Organising
ZANU-PF	Zimbabwe African National Union-Patriotic Front
ZAPU	Zimbabwe African People's Union
ZCIEA	Zimbabwe Chamber of Informal Economy Associations
ZCTU	Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions
ZIMASSET	Zimbabwe Agenda for Sustainable Socio-Economic Transformation

ZIMCODD	Zimbabwe Coalition for Debt and Development
ZIMRA	Zimbabwe Revenue Authority
ZIMSTAT	Zimbabwe National Statistics Agency
ZINASU	Zimbabwe National Students Union
ZISO	Zimbabwe Informal Sector Organisation
ZRP	Zimbabwe Republican Police
ZUM	Zimbabwe Unity Movement

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MAP OF HARARE

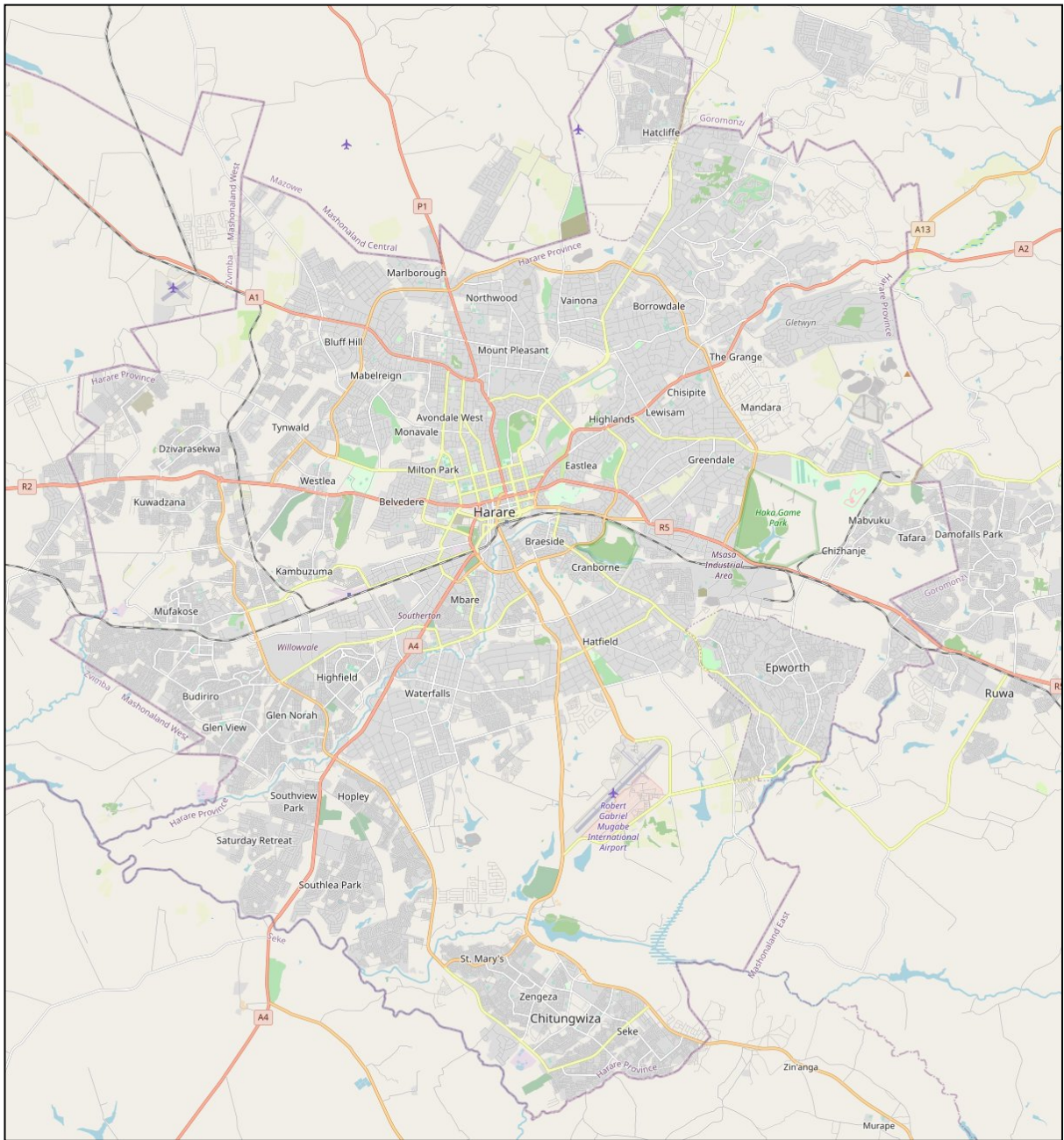


Figure 1. *The Map of Greater Harare, Epworth and Chitungwiza. Source: OpenStreetMap contributors, Map of Harare [Data file from 24 December 2020]. Available at: <https://www.openstreetmap.org/#map=12/-17.8297/31.0464> (accessed 24 December 2020).*

CHAPTER 1.

INTRODUCTION: POLITICAL CHALLENGES OF ECONOMIC INFORMALISATION IN URBAN ZIMBABWE

§1. INTRODUCTION

The thesis presents a theoretical and empirical enquiry into the questions of how and why ideas and practices of citizenship have changed under the influence of profound economic informalisation in urban Zimbabwe, where roughly a third of the country's population lives (World Bank, 2021). This issue is crucial in the rapidly changing and problematic socio-economic conditions of Zimbabwe as it allows us to understand the nature of changes that have occurred in people's understandings and experiences of citizenship. It also gives us an insight into the relationships between individuals who earn a living from the informal sector (street vendors, informal traders, cross-border traders, service providers, and small-scale manufacturers) and political and civic actors by focusing on how individuals interact with these entities and engage in the political life of the country.

The thesis challenges and expands the existing literature on citizenship in developing countries and emphasises economic informalisation as a key phenomenon in the economic and political life of the country that has eventually led to changes in people's ideas and practices of citizenship. It looks at grassroots notions of citizenship as opposed to government definitions; considers the impact of associational life in the informal sector on citizenship; and identifies changes in people's understanding of productivity, taxation, employment, and residence as key notions of citizenship under the impact of economic informalisation. The thesis refers to economic and political developments in Zimbabwe from the colonial period onwards to see their implications for citizenship in the urban informal sector but largely focuses on the 2013–2018 period when it comes to the changes in the understanding and practices of citizenship.

From the late 1990s, Zimbabwe faced a massive, multi-faceted economic crisis which included a decline in industrial and agricultural production, hyperinflation, income reduction, the introduction of a multi-currency monetary system, the collapse of the formal economy, and rapid economic informalisation, especially in urban areas (Raftopoulos, 2009; Alexander and McGregor, 2013). Due to its devastating impact on the socio-political and economic development of Zimbabwe, it came to be known in the recent history of Zimbabwe simply as ‘the crisis’ (Raftopoulos, 2009). The causes of the crisis have been much debated by scholars and politicians alike and can be tracked from the 1970s (Bond, 2007). Patrick Bond (Ibid.) suggests that the long-term economic crisis started as early as 1974 when the gross domestic product dropped due to the overaccumulation of capital which means that due to excessive investment, new goods could not be produced and brought to the market with a profit, and consequently capital was accumulated in sectoral bottlenecks rather than returned to investment (Ibid., p. 153).

Profound economic informalisation became one of the most visible and tangible expressions of the crisis in the urban context with the informal sector filling in all economic, social, and political voids created by the collapse of the formal economy and urban infrastructure in spatial, temporal, and experiential dimensions. It was characterised by a range of social and economic consequences, such as a decline of income, increase in small-scale trade, growth of backyard industries, occupation fluidity, limited social mobility, deprivation, and shifting gender relations, with men taking up women’s economic roles and spaces or women becoming breadwinners (Jones, 2010). Economic informalisation was initially largely a result of people’s adaptation to massive retrenchments and the broader economic collapse caused by economic liberalisation, especially the Economic Structural Adjustment Programme (ESAP) of the 1990s which was designed by international financial institutions and introduced by the Zimbabwe African National Union–Patriotic Front (ZANU–PF) government.

The exponential growth of the urban informal sector in the 2000s was a new development for Zimbabwe. At Independence in 1980, the informal sector in Harare was rather small and involved under 10% of the labour force (Mazingi and Kamidza, 2011, p. 327). However, in 2004, 76% of the urban labour force was already estimated to be in the informal sector (Dube, 2010). The Zimbabwe National Statistics Agency's (ZIMSTAT) Labour Force Survey suggested that the share of informal employment to total employment was 84.2% in 2011 and 94.5% in 2014 showing a continuous expansion of the non-agricultural informal sector through the 2000s and 2010s (ZIMSTAT, 2004; 2011; 2014). Since the majority of people lost their formal jobs or could not find any formal employment during the economic crisis, they resorted to informal economic activities, such as vending, cross-border trade, service provision, and small-scale production. Unlike in many other African countries, the urban informal sector in Zimbabwe was small and strongly regulated until the mid and late 1990s when the formal economy began collapsing. As a result, informal economic activities and the presence and visibility of the informal sector, especially in Harare's Central Business District (CBD), have frequently been viewed as temporary, undesirable, and alien to the Zimbabwean economy and urban lifestyle characterised by ideas of post-colonial Zimbabwean 'modernity' which originated from the notions of colonial 'modernity' (see, for instance, Kamete, 2008; Mbiba, 2017; Morreira, 2010).

The thesis argues that rapid and vast economic informalisation led to a disconnect between the modernist thinking and survivalist reality experienced by urban residents many of whom had to resort to the informal sector to earn a living. With other socio-political and economic developments, this divide affected the political life in urban Zimbabwe. In the course of their everyday political life, people with informal sector livelihoods emerged as self-reliant citizens. Many of them entered associational life in the informal sector and engaged in debates about the nature of urban citizenship challenging the notions of citizenship imposed by the government, reinterpreting notions of citizenship to meet their reality, and shaping distinct ideas

and practices of citizenship. As a result of economic informalisation and related socio-political processes, the contours of citizenship in urban Zimbabwe have started changing and acquiring dimensions that speak to the erosion and re-consideration of the post-colonial Zimbabwean ‘modernity’ and the reality of everyday survival in the urban informal sector.

§2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The theoretical framework of the thesis consists of three intertwined analytical categories: the informal sector, citizenship, and the divide between the modernist imagination and survivalist reality in the informal sector context. This section discusses the meanings and relevance of these analytical categories for studying the impact of economic informalisation and broader socio-political shifts in urban Zimbabwe on grassroots understanding and practices of citizenship in the informal sector.

Defining the ‘Informal Sector’

The ‘informal sector’ as a concept is the starting point and a key analytical space in which the study takes place and a phenomenon on which the research focuses. It is important to clarify what is meant by it and clearly delineate the boundaries of this concept. In this research, I prefer speaking of the ‘informal sector’ rather than ‘informal economy’. The term ‘informal sector’ was introduced in the 1970s by the International Labour Organisation (ILO) to describe ‘the existence of working poor struggling to produce goods and services without their activities being recognised, registered or protected by public authorities’ in Ghana and Kenya (ILO cited in War on Want, 2006, p. 13). At the same time, Keith Hart (1973) used the term ‘informal sector’ and distinguished between legitimate and illegitimate activities within the informal sector in his research. The 2002 International Labour Conference criticised the term ‘informal sector’ since there was, in fact, no specific economic sector, i.e. industry or specific income-generating activity (ILO, 2002). The ILO then introduced an employment-based term

‘informal economy’ which was used to describe wage and non-wage income-generating activities in both urban and rural areas (Ibid.). In the academic literature, the terms ‘informal economy’ and ‘informal sector’ are frequently used interchangeably, and there is no gold standard, for instance, Deborah Potts (2008) prefers ‘the informal sector’ while Kate Meagher (2010) utilises ‘the informal economy’ concept.

I acknowledge the ILO’s criticism of the term ‘informal sector’ but prefer to use it in this particular research since economic informalisation brought about changes not only to the Zimbabwean urban economy but also to broader social relations and political processes. The processes I focus on in this paper are predominantly socio-political and emerged from major qualitative changes in the economy. The term ‘informal sector’ allows engaging with such non-economic aspects of informality as shifting understandings of citizenship, political marginalisation of people in the informal sector, urban politics and governance, associational life, networking, and connections with actors beyond the informal domain.

Although the dualist approach to studying the formal–informal sector has been widely criticised and there is a continuous exchange and blurred boundaries between the two domains (Potts, 2008), I maintain this division for analytical purposes as the majority of my respondents saw the formal economy, official employment, and ‘proper’ jobs as a reference point and an almost unreachable ideal when they discussed their reality. As will be demonstrated later in this thesis, the formal–informal divide is a factor that has shaped people’s relationship with the authorities and society. My respondents spoke of the formal–informal divide as ‘real’, and it affected their ideas and practices of citizenship.

The informal sector and politics around it are some of the most researched themes in the field of international development. The informal sector has been studied from economic, political, and anthropological perspectives. However, the term ‘informal economy’ (or ‘sector’) itself has been widely debated. Some scholars have suggested that in African countries, the whole idea of dichotomising formal and informal economic sectors is unhelpful. Beatrice Hibou

(1999) and Janet Roitman (2005) suggest that, on the one hand, illegal (or informal and unregulated) practices generally penetrate the formal economy in the African context, and that, on the other hand, the informal sector is internally well-organised, which makes the argument about the formal sector being the organised one redundant and analytically unhelpful. Keith Hart (2006, p. 27) also suggests that the juxtaposition of the formal and informal economies is not useful since there has been a tendency towards informalisation in the majority of developing countries.

Other scholars argue that focusing on the ‘informal’ domain is crucial to studying economic, social, and political processes in African countries since it describes specific social organisational practices and non-state economic regulations (Hansen and Vaa, 2004). Karen Tranberg Hansen and Mariken Vaa (2004, pp. 19–20) argue that the ‘informal economy’ as a concept is useful in research as it allows to focus on how exactly many urban livelihoods are made. They insist that since the future of African countries is likely to be urban, studying dynamics of the urban informal economy and ‘continuously reconsidering’ the informal economy are central to studying socio-economic and political processes in African countries. William Maloney (2004) suggests that the term ‘informal economy’ is not unhelpful but should be revisited. He argues that contrary to a widespread belief, the informal sector should not be viewed as a disadvantaged residual of a dualistic economy to which people resort when they cannot obtain formal jobs. Rather, it should be seen as ‘the unregulated, developing country analogue of the voluntary entrepreneurial small firm sector’ (Ibid., p. 1159). This suggests that people may engage in informal economic activities voluntarily (Ibid.), which, of course, does not apply to all people whose livelihoods are in the informal sector.

Although indeed, the formal–informal dualism may be unhelpful as the boundaries between the two segments of the economy are blurred and the informal sector is frequently stigmatised as inferior (Potts, 2008), the perspective of maintaining the analytical division between the formal and informal sectors is justifiable in this research for three reasons. Firstly,

in many African countries, the formal economy not only exists but makes up a significant part of the economy, and there are varying patterns of interaction and exchange of labour and resources between the formal and informal sectors. Secondly, the most common discourse of governments, international organisations, and civil society actors concerning the informal sector is that of 'formalisation', be it partial or full, which usually means increased state regulation of economic activities (ILO, 2009). Indeed, the ILO defines the informal economy as 'income-generating activities which take place outside of the formal regulatory framework, as opposed to the formal economy where similar activities are in effect regulated' (Sassen, 1997, p. 2). Finally, the 'informal sector' concept is important for understanding the processes in Zimbabwe from the late 1990s as economic informalisation has transformed the social fabric in urban areas, visions of future development, relationships among the government, local authorities, individuals, political parties, civil society, political movements, and individuals. By economic informalisation I mean the transition from the formal economy to the informal, expressed in the flows of the labour force and resources from the formal to the informal economy, and a range of consequences associated with it, such as the exposure of former formal sector workers to the economic, social, and labour insecurities of the informal economy, an overall decrease of income, involvement in political patronage networks, creation of new opportunities for corruption, and the changing nature of political and social mobilisation (ILO, 2002, p. 3).

It is crucial to distinguish the informal sector from illegal and criminal economic activities to avoid further criminalisation and stigmatisation of informal economic activities as a whole. Although obviously illegal and criminal activities constitute a part of the informal sector (for instance, drug production, trafficking and dealing, money laundering, black-market currency exchange, or prostitution which are criminalised in Zimbabwe), prevailing informal economic activities are not criminal, and people who engage in them, although might be violating certain legal acts frequently do not do this deliberately. A large part of the informal sector essentially exists on the fringes of the law but provides services and goods that are legal

(ILO, 2002, p. 3). For instance, street vendors do not have an intention of violating the City Council's by-laws and most of them do not sell illegal items. Many of them also do not object to paying income tax. However, the legal and regulatory frameworks, implementation, and law enforcement, as well as policies and narratives around the informal sector, all too often move such activities to the 'illegal' domain – 'illegal' from the perspective of the government and local authorities, not individuals earning a living in the informal sector.

Modernist Imagination and Economic Informalisation: The Great Divide

From colonial times, society in Zimbabwe has been deeply divided. Colonisers and the colonised, blacks and whites, rural and urban, traditional and modern, formal and informal, ZANU–PF and the opposition Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) – these are only some of the divides that have shaped society and politics. I suggest that as a result of rapid and widespread economic informalisation, a new 'great divide' emerged – the divide between the modernist imagination and survivalist reality. This divide has become a canvas for all social, economic, and political processes in urban Zimbabwe, including the transformations of citizenship.

In a way, this contemporary divide is similar to the colonial divide between 'modernity' and 'tradition' in Southern Rhodesia (Robins, 1998; on the 'invention of tradition', see Ranger, 1983; 1993). The 'modernity' part of the equation derives from colonial and early post-colonial practices and is strongly based on colonial imagination of urban sites with strict planning, developed infrastructure as well as economic and social practices, such as wage labour, formal employment, and an industrial economy (Yoshikuni, 2007; Potts, 2011; Ranger, 2007; Kamete, 2008; Muchadenyika and Williams, 2017).

The 'unmodern' survivalist part of the contemporary divide, however, is not 'traditional'. Unlike in many other African countries, the urban informal sector in colonial and

early post-colonial Zimbabwe was small in comparison with the formal economy and domestic work, restricted in space and size, and strictly regulated (Yoshikuni, 2007; Kamete, 2008; see also Alexander, 2012). Massive economic informalisation from the late 1990s was a novel development for urban Zimbabwe, and this development was not welcomed by anyone, whether individuals, government, trade unions, civil society, or industry. All major actors were confused as to how to approach this new phenomenon which did not fit in the desired 'modern' economy, 'modern' city, 'modern' lifestyle and 'modern' mentality.

As Olúfemi Táíwò (2010) argues, 'colonialism pre-empted modernity in Africa' which explains why the colonial, not local, understanding of modernity has been perpetuated at all levels. It is important to note that my respondents mostly agreed that socio-economic features of modernity and modernisation, such as industrialisation, formal employment, education, infrastructure, public services, urban planning, and order, were core expressions of modernity. According to Táíwò (2010, p. 5), such understanding of modernity is superficial, and modernity, in essence, refers to 'subjectivity, reason, and progress'. I do not see the two as exclusive since the former constitute the material and practical expressions of the latter. Jürgen Habermas (1990, p. 5) suggests that 'the secular concept of modernity expresses the conviction that the future has already begun: it is the epoch that lives for the future, that opens itself up to the novelty of the future'. I suggest that in Zimbabwe, during the period of my fieldwork, modernity in this understanding existed both in the past and in the future while the present was seen as a period of timelessness, or 'a historical vortex' as Jeremy Jones (2010) calls it, which is neither forward nor backwards moving and falls out of the developmental and historical timescale of the country. For my respondents, modernity was essentialised as the goal of economic and political development and as a past stage of economic development that was almost lost and now existed mostly in people's minds.

The result of rapid and unprecedented economic informalisation was the desynchronisation between Zimbabwean urban 'expectations of modernity' (to use James

Ferguson's [1999] terminology), or a modernist mindset, and the socio-economic and political urban reality which, for the vast majority of urbanites, became primarily (if not exclusively) centred around everyday survival. A few decades earlier, James Ferguson (1999) studied a somewhat similar process on the *Zambian Copperbelt*. He wrote an 'ethnography of decline' about the failure of modernity on the *Zambian Copperbelt* in the 1980s. He looked at urban life in Zambia after Independence when Zambia was expected to become a truly 'modern', 'first-world' country, but in the 1970s, the economy started declining, and Ferguson explained how these processes were culturally and socially experienced in urban areas. He suggested that modernisation was a myth (both as a false idea and as a cosmological blueprint) and the narrative of urbanisation and urban development was wrong since it was based on a teleological and linear view of modernisation that did not play out in Zambia. Instead of speaking of Zambia 'dropping out of' its economic path and world economy, he spoke of 'abjection' which captured the humiliation of being thrown aside. Ferguson noted that people profoundly sensed disconnection and 'described their material poverty not simply as lack but as a loss' (Ibid., p. 236). A similar argument can be made about Zimbabwe: as it will be demonstrated below, people expressed a profound feeling of a loss of modernity in the course of the economic collapse.

Some Zimbabweanists have argued that there have been continuities and changes in the understanding of modernity. For instance, Shannon Morreira (2010) discusses 'disappearing modernities' in post-2000 Harare when the urban economy and infrastructure started rapidly deteriorating. She suggests that in the context of deep political and economic crises, which significantly affected urban life in Zimbabwe, citizens developed their own interpretations of modernity which differed from the vision of urban modernity employed by the state. The attempts of the state to preserve the city as a site of modernity led to the association of urban pollution and filth with the urban poor and destitute. The planners' vision of a modern post-colonial city was that of a formalised, ordered, and structured one with a limited and preferably

invisible informal sector (Kamete, 2008). However, as Morreira (2010) suggests, individuals viewed the informal sector as a means of connecting and maintaining at least some aspects of urban modernity. For instance, kinship networks, migration to neighbouring countries, cross-border trade, and barter allowed them to save money in a stable foreign currency for emergencies or schooling, the latter being a major marker of urban modernity from colonial times.

While urban modernities might be disappearing in their material form – indeed, water and sanitation infrastructure has been collapsing, piles of rubbish growing, roads deteriorating, and squatter camps and informal settlements mushrooming on the urban periphery, – the ideals of urban modernity, including values and lifestyle have remained very much alive in the minds of urbanites as well as planners, politicians, and government which has a strong impact on aspirations, practices, actions, and relations among various actors in urban Zimbabwe. This divide has served as a background for Zimbabweans to reconsider their understanding of citizenship.

Citizenship: Belonging and Living

The goal of this research is to understand the changes that have been happening in grassroots interpretations and practices of citizenship in Zimbabwe's urban informal sector in the face of large-scale economic informalisation. There has been extensive research on citizenship, and the definitions of citizenship vary widely, although they all revolve around two key processes: belonging to a political community and living as a citizen, i.e. engaging in citizenship practices.

Citizenship is notoriously hard to define. As Lynn Staeheli (2010) suggests, the quest for locating the concept of citizenship is comparable with searching for Waldo in a *Where's Waldo?* book as citizenship is similarly hard to spot, pin down, and define among other related concepts.

Only a few things are clear from the countless debates over citizenship: it is a multifaceted phenomenon, it has different meanings for people and groups in different contexts, and it is defined by both what it is and what it is not (Ibid.). Despite all the complexities, fluidity, and elusiveness of citizenship as an analytical concept, it is deeply meaningful – as a legal status, as a political subjectivity, as a (self-)identity mechanism, as an everyday practice, as a claim, as a tool for political and economic in- or exclusion, as a foundation for nation-building, as a political and social status in a state, organisation, or community, and as a socio-political ideal.

Classic definitions of citizenship looked at it as a legal status that signified an individual's membership in a political community. Renowned sociologist T. H. Marshall defined citizenship as 'a status bestowed on those who are full members of a community [i.e. a nation]. All who possess the status are equal with respect to the rights and duties [i.e. obligations] with which the status is endowed' (Marshall, 1983 [1950], p. 253). According to this definition of citizenship, individuals who are recognised by the state as citizens can live their own political, economic and social lives as long as their actions do not prevent other citizens from doing the same. It is the duty of the state in this arrangement to maintain the status quo. Citizens, in general, have responsibilities, such as, for example, participating in political processes and paying taxes.

This classic definition acquired a new dimension when Bryan Turner (1986) further developed the idea. He arguably gave the most fundamental modern definition of citizenship by proposing that citizenship was comprised of two components – social membership (or belonging to a political community) and access to and distribution of resources. Access to limited resources as a measure of citizenship has been the focus of multiple studies in the past two decades. Scholars have identified very particular and context-specific modes of interaction between individuals (citizens) and governments and organisations that distribute resources, which are helpful and developed in this study. Some studies addressed the problems of public health and looked at medications and health services as limited resources around which specific forms of citizenship emerged. For instance, Adriana Petryna (2002) looks at how Chernobyl

victims and people with radiation-related health conditions made claims on the state in Ukraine. In post-Chernobyl Ukraine, due to the highly problematic handling of the nuclear disaster in 1986, health became an entitlement that had to be negotiated with the state for a broad category of people. Petryna calls the phenomenon ‘biological citizenship’ as individuals had to make claims to special healthcare services, medical resources, social justice, and human rights – all through the prism of the disaster with long-lasting consequences which turned their ordinary lives into everyday survival. Vinh-Kim Nguyen (2010) further elaborates on health-related citizenship and discusses another healthcare emergency. He looks at the human immunodeficiency virus infection and acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (HIV/AIDS) in West Africa in 1994–2000 when the availability of life-saving antiretroviral therapy was limited. He argues that the relationships among individuals and other actors in the field ‘shaped the therapeutic citizenship... that emerged in place where other forms of citizenship could not be relied upon to secure life itself’. Nguyen distinguishes ‘therapeutic citizenship’ from Petryna’s ‘biological citizenship’ since the former ‘arises where large, stable institutions that can grant access to life-saving therapy are absent’ (Nguyen, 2010, pp. 108–109).

Other scholars have studied citizenship in terms of access to other public services. Nikhil Anand (2017), for example, suggests that citizenship emerges and is shaped, moulded, and contested through ongoing struggles to control water resources in Mumbai, India. Anand explores how water is delivered and distributed among Mumbai residents – through a complex, sophisticated, and dynamic infrastructure and relationship among residents, city managers, plumbers, and engineers. This system of water distribution in many ways strengthens social identities and the political status of residents, allowing for further exclusion of marginalised groups from access to public services as only those who are recognised by the city as ‘proper’ and ‘full’ citizens are allowed to have full access to legitimate water services. Anand terms the citizenship that emerges within such interactions as ‘hydraulic citizenship’ which he defines as ‘the ability of residents to be recognised by city agencies through legitimate water services —

[which] is an intermittent, partial, and multiply constituted social and material process' (Ibid., p. 8–9). He proceeds to distinguish this kind of citizenship from more classical forms of citizenship and linear political processes and suggests that it is a dynamic and perpetual process of negotiation, reiteration, and struggle grounded in social histories, political processes, and physical infrastructure of water delivery and distribution in the urban context (Ibid.). Anand notes that it takes a lot of effort not only to become but also to remain a 'hydraulic' citizen in Mumbai as water supply and infrastructure as well as social and political relations linked to it shape social and political communities in the urban context as well as exclude and marginalise certain social groups from hydraulic citizenship (Ibid., p. 10).

In his recent study of the 2008–2009 cholera outbreak in Harare, Simukai Chigudu (2019; 2020) bridges these two approaches and looks at urban citizenship in Harare in the context of the healthcare catastrophe which resulted from failed public service delivery, namely water and sanitation. He argues that citizenship is born out of everyday encounters with the state and its institutions and such detrimental health crises as cholera outbreaks make such interactions truly vital to people's survival. Chigudu discusses 'substantive citizenship', which is expressed through access to public services, modern infrastructure, and resources and which individuals expect to have but have been denied which led to the healthcare emergency and loss of lives.

Indeed, major events and processes in different areas of social life – healthcare, infrastructure, economy, politics – often result in re-negotiation of and changes in understandings of citizenship, its boundaries, and practices. Dorothy Solinger (1999) studies citizenship among rural-to-urban migrants in China in the 1990s when China was introducing market reforms. Rural migrants did not have and could not fully obtain urban *hukou* (household registration), i.e. full urban citizenship, and were de facto undocumented migrants within their own country, which deprived them of basic rights, such as education, formal employment, or voting. Despite those challenges, many villagers illegally moved to urban areas to join the

burgeoning market system. The market system, Solinger suggests, enabled some to prosper, but did not provide any substantial solution to the citizenship problem of rural migrants who had to go against the (state's) grain and engage in different practices and acts to constitute themselves as urban 'proto-citizens'.

All these studies about citizenship have one feature in common: they discuss processes, understandings, forms, and changes in the meaning of citizenship that occur in the context or as a result of major economic, social, and political shifts in political communities. While it is undeniable that the understanding and practices of citizenship are in constant evolution, such major events as market reforms, healthcare emergencies, rapid urbanisation, or as in the case of this thesis, economic informalisation, stimulate substantial shifts and revision of existing grassroots understanding of citizenship and relations between individuals and other civic and political actors, be it the government, local authorities, political parties, or civil society.

Another core theme in the literature on citizenship that reinforces this point refers to the making of citizens. For Charles Tilly (1999; 2005), citizenship is produced through political and social contention. In his understanding, citizenship is a socio-political category with flexible boundaries which can be stretched or constrained from above (by political authorities) through the imposition of new narratives and/or criteria or from below (by individuals) through challenging existing definitions. Tilly views a relationship between a government and citizens as a social contract that defines the rights and obligations of both sides towards each other, and which marks out boundaries of the said community and excludes those who are deemed outsiders. For Tilly, citizenship is not a given state, rather it describes relations between the state (government) and individuals who are considered its subjects (Tilly, 1999, p. 251). He notes that the contract between a government and citizens is never complete and is constantly renegotiated and reshaped by actions and interactions of actors, based upon unclarified assumptions, and grounded in the community's collective memory (Tilly, 2005). This is important in the

Zimbabwean case where the modernity promise is at the core of collective memory which shapes the notions of citizenship shared by both the state and citizens.

Other scholars have looked at citizenship from a top-down perspective, for instance, focusing on how governments define who belongs to a nation and who does not, or how local authorities decide who may reside and enjoy full citizenship in a city and who cannot, or how governments ‘create’ citizens and forcefully exclude, either socially, politically or even physically, those whom they see as outsiders from a political community. As seen above in Solinger’s (1999) study, the Chinese government used household registration to politically, socially, and economically exclude rural migrants from urban citizenship. In the Zimbabwean context, Sara Rich Dorman (2016) demonstrated how the ZANU–PF government initiated and implemented Operation *Murambatsvina*, meant to ‘clean out the filth’¹ and destroy illegal/informal housing and structures, and effectively excluded from the urban space and deprived of the right to the city² all those urban dwellers whom it considered not productive, forcing them to go to rural areas as it was assumed that every true Zimbabwean had a rural home.

The relationship between clientelism and citizenship, the former being enforced by party structures and negotiated at the local level, has also been explored. Sian Lazar (2004) takes a step to view clientelism as a form of citizenship practice. Similarly, JoAnn McGregor and Kudzai Chatiza (2019) talk of ‘partisan citizenship’ in informal settlements on Harare’s urban periphery where demonstration of loyalty to and political identification with the ruling party, which controlled the settlements, became the grounds for making claims to limited resources and housing. Such an approach has been challenged by Monique Nuijten (2013) who proposes that it is necessary not to broaden the boundaries of citizenship as a concept but to

¹ The translation of ‘murambatsvina’ into English.

² Although the term ‘right to the city’ is strongly associated with the work of David Harvey (2008) where he refers to it as ‘a right to change ourselves by changing the city...the freedom to make and remake our cities’, I use this term throughout the thesis in a different meaning to describe people’s right and ability to use, inhabit, produce, and be present and visible in the urban space.

look beyond citizenship to describe the relationships and interactions between individuals and political actors. For her, citizenship is ‘a language of the political’ which she describes as ‘a discourse that frames practices of governance, distinguishes a variety of political agents, defines their corresponding responsibilities and duties, etc’ (Ibid., p. 12) which may also include other relations, such as clientelism. Studying slum upgrading in Recife, Brazil, Nuijten notes that although the project was meant to ‘create’ citizens, individuals did not use the language of citizens and rights but resorted to clientelist relationships with politicians perceiving anything that the latter did for them as ‘gifts’ rather than ‘rights’ (Ibid.).

At the same time, scholars have broadened and deepened our understanding of citizenship with relation to the poor, destitute, marginalised, stigmatised, and systematically excluded individuals and social groups and shifted the focus from the legal, formal, and top-down definitions of citizenship to grassroots perspectives. For instance, James Holston (2008) discusses informal and even illegal claims of individuals for social, economic, and political rights and inclusion and talks of ‘insurgent citizenship’ which emerged through mobilisation and illegal occupation of land and housing by the poor, thus pointing out forms of urban citizenship that may emerge outside the formal city domain.

In most cases, there are wide gaps between citizenship as a legal status and everyday practices of citizenship (Nuijten, 2013, p. 11). As a result, individuals who are constantly marginalised, stigmatised, excluded from certain spaces and processes, and denied access to resources are frequently referred to as ‘second-rate citizens’, ‘mutilated citizens’, or not seen as citizens at all (Ibid.). Jonathan Xavier Inda (2005) notes that citizenship depends on categories, such as gender, class, and race and calls this phenomenon ‘variegated citizenship’ when citizenship as a legal status does not mean that all citizens are equal. This is very much the case with citizenship in Harare where certain categories of individuals are seen as more or less citizens and are treated better or worse by the government, local authorities, and in their communities by other individuals. Citizenship may be, in a sense, placed on a scale, or rather,

on multiple scales, where specific characteristics of an individual (for instance, a social status, job status, wealth, political affiliation, contribution to the economy, gender, age, race – depending on the political and economic circumstances) affect how much citizenship, as it were, this individual has in a particular context or community and how her/his practices of citizenship differ from those of other citizens. A similar approach may be observed in the abovementioned concepts of biological citizenship, substantive citizenship, or hydraulic citizenship as in these examples, there were those citizens who had greater access to state resources and public services and those who struggled to access them.

However, the academic focus on practices of citizenship has been criticised as well. Engin Isin and Greg Nielsen (2008) discuss ‘acts of citizenship’ and suggest that it is vital to view citizenship as not just a ‘status’ that is assigned to individuals or has to be earned in order to gain some rights or ‘practices’ which are thought to reflect the substance of citizenship, for example, voting. They suggest focusing on ‘those acts when, regardless of status and substance, subjects constitute themselves as citizens or, better still, as those to whom the right to have rights is due. But the focus shifts from subjects as such to acts (or deeds) that produce such subjects’ (Ibid., p. 2). Thus, the focus is on the small acts of formation and disruption of citizenship – an approach that, Staeheli claims ‘overlook[s] citizens in favour of citizenship’ (Staeheli, 2010, p. 399).

This thesis adopts an approach to citizenship that has a citizen at the centre. Citizenship as a concept is meaningless if it cannot be practised by individuals who identify with a particular community. It is important for this research to view citizenship not as a given legal status, a set of rights and obligations, or a mere fact of belonging to a political community, but rather as a lived experience through which the pre-existing relationship between an individual and the state (or another political community) is contested, challenged, and negotiated. This reflects core changes in the socio-economic and political terrains in which people live and to which they adapt.

The concept of 'lived citizenship' is a result of feminist contributions to the debate on citizenship and reflects 'the meaning that citizenship actually has in people's lives and the ways in which people's social and cultural backgrounds and material circumstances affect their lives as citizens' (Hall and Williamson, 1999, p. 2). It allows us to see the meaning and experience of citizenship in the everyday life of people (Kallio, Wood and Häkli, 2020). In line with this approach, the thesis focuses on how people's lives as citizens and their understanding and grassroots interpretation of citizenship are affected by shifting material circumstances and political, social, and economic processes linked to it. In addition, this interpretation of citizenship helps understand 'how individuals understand and negotiate... rights and responsibilities, belonging, and participation' (Lister et al, 2007, p. 168).

Lived citizenship is not a status that is bestowed upon a particular group and is denied to another from 'above' (by the state/government). It is a dynamic and perpetual process of rethinking, discussion, negotiation, and struggle happening at different levels, for instance, local and national. Kirsi Pauliina Kallio, Bronwyn Elisabeth Wood and Jouni Häkli (2020) identify four dimensions of lived citizenship: spatiality, intersubjectivity, performance, and affect. Being a lived experience, citizenship 'cannot be divorced from its context – temporal and national' (Lister et al., 2007, p. 1) which explains why space is a crucial feature of lived citizenship. Indeed, as I will demonstrate later in the thesis, temporality, political community, and physical space are crucial for citizenship as it is experienced and interpreted by people with informal sector livelihoods in urban Zimbabwe. The intersubjectivity of lived citizenship matters as well. The socialisation and interaction with others allow individuals to place themselves in a community, city and state as citizens (Kallio, Wood and Häkli, 2020, p. 717). As I have mentioned above, people may see citizenship, figuratively speaking, as unequally distributed and unevenly experienced depending on the characteristics that an individual possesses. In the lived citizenship framework, performance of certain practices matters as well. Practices in that approach are understood not as duties that are imposed on citizens by the state, such as voting

in elections or paying taxes, but as the abovementioned ‘acts of citizenship’ (Isin, 2008). Finally, lived citizenship is an affective experience. When citizenship is seen as a legal status or a set of rights and responsibilities, it is usually stripped of human emotions. However, lived citizenship, from an individual’s perspective, is very much about feelings of belonging or not belonging, being entitled or not entitled, respected or not respected, fairly treated or unfairly treated (Kallio, Wood and Häkli, 2020, p. 718). As I will discuss in the thesis, life as an urban Zimbabwean citizen is a deeply emotional and affective life. For these reasons, I focus on lived citizenship in the thesis which allows me to analyse both ideas and practices of citizenship among informal sector actors.

‘Lived citizenship’ partly overlaps with another term used to describe people’s relations with other actors in the political realm – ‘political subjectivity’, and it is important to distinguish the two. Political subjectivity framework allows scholars to study the subjective experience as it is shaped and expressed within political power systems (Foucault, 1982; 1996; 1997). Political subjectivity may be expressed in many forms, citizenship and clientelism being the most common ones. ‘Lived citizenship’, on the one hand, is a form of political subjectivity because it describes a subjective experience of belonging to a political community. On the other hand, it goes beyond the political subjectivity domain as it centres experiences of citizenship in people’s lives and allows us to see what meaning they have to people and how a variety of circumstances, not just political (referring to relations between individuals and the government, local authorities, and political parties) but also economic, social, and material, affect it.

Lived citizenship may take different forms, for example, insurgent citizenship mentioned above or, as it will be argued later in the thesis, self-reliant citizenship when people do not expect assistance or any meaningful interventions from the government or local authorities and survive on their own. Lived citizenship practices may also be shaped by and in the course of associational life, training and collective action among individuals. Lived citizenship ideas and practices may be grounded in specific notions which become central to one’s identity as a

citizen, one's vision of societal norms according to which a claim to various aspects of citizenship is made (socio-economic and political rights, respect or higher social status, for example) and one's ability to make a claim to citizenship. Indeed, scholars have looked at citizenship practices and understandings through the lens of rights (Isin, 2009; Mandel, 2008), obligations (Englund, 2006) and collectivity (Lazar, 2008). Sian Lazar (2013) suggested that the concept of citizenship can be applied to any political community including trade unions. There may be different levels of citizenship, for example, citizenship of a nation-state and citizenship of a smaller political community, such as a trade union. Lazar also suggests that a technology of the self that is dominant in the Argentinian trade unions is the process of 'containment' as self-making through a range of collective practices. I will argue that in urban Zimbabwe, informal sector organisations (ISOs) became crucial spaces (alongside the city and the state), or political communities, in which particular notions of lived citizenship were shaped in the course of training and collective action: a collectivity-based notion (similarly to trade unions), a respectability-based one (grounded in social norms), and a classic rights-based understanding. All these particular forms of lived citizenship may be seen as special cases of self-reliant and insurgent citizenships. The lived citizenship framework, therefore, allows us to see ideas and actual experiences of citizenship, their variations and transformations over time.

The synthesis of these three analytical categories – the informal sector, the 'great divide' between the modernist mindset and survivalist reality and lived citizenship – provides the necessary framework to analyse the subtle changes in people's interpretations and experiences of citizenship in a dramatically changed economic and socio-political environment. It allows us to have a meaningful discussion of the transformations that have occurred in people's political visions of the past, present and future of Zimbabwe, their relationships with core civic and political actors, and adaptive practices of citizenship which reflect both the pursuit for modernity and the need for survival. Using these analytical categories, the thesis suggests that

the exponential growth of urban informality led to the divide between the thinking centred around the notions and collective memory of modernity and the reality in which the primary concern is livelihood and survival. It is in this context that practices of lived citizenship are transformed as individuals in the informal sector challenge top-down notions of citizenship based on modernist post-colonial assumptions and negotiated them to meet their reality.

§3. METHODOLOGY AND ETHICS

The thesis focuses on the informal sector in Harare which I chose as a research site for several reasons. Firstly, it is the capital and the largest urban centre in Zimbabwe. Because of its history (see Chapter 2) and centrality for the political life of Zimbabwe (among other urban centres), Harare became a space in which a large part of urban informal economic and political activity took place. Second, Harare became the desired residence place for thousands of people after Independence (Chigudu, 2020, p. 47), as people sought to enhance their economic opportunities and social mobility routes through migration to the capital. The growing population coupled with the economic and political issues resulted in the emergence of severe problems with infrastructure and housing, and consequently many issues in Harare are actualised more vividly than in other urban centres. Third, the civic and political activities of many civil society organisations, protest movements, and political parties are more prominent in Harare, again, because it is the capital city, and political contestation is particularly tough here.

The core part of the thesis – the changes in the ideas and practices of citizenship among people in the informal sector (Chapters 6 and 7) – largely focuses on the 2013–2018 period. However, to understand these subtle and gradual transformations, it is essential to travel back in time and explore the history and politics of the urban informal sector and origins of urban modernity and respectability which still inform contemporary ideas about citizenship and pre-2013 politics towards the informal sector. Thus, the thesis explores two additional timelines in

different chapters: from colonial Zimbabwe until the crisis of the late 1990s on the one hand and, on the other, the origin of massive economic informalisation from the late 1990s when the foundations of contemporary politics towards the informal sector and ideas and practices of citizenship were shaped up to 2013. These historical excursions are crucial to the understanding of the shifts that started happening in the interpretation and experiences of citizenship by people in the informal sector and their relationship with and attitudes to civic and political actors in the 2013–2018 period.

The choice of 2013–2018 as a major period for the study is owed to several reasons. First, although it is challenging to indicate when exactly particular changes in the interpretation and practices of citizenship started, it is possible to compare recent manifestations with older ones, for instance, from the Government of National Unity (GNU) (2009–2013) period, the 1990s, or the 1980s. Second, it is due to the nature of people’s memory that people only recall recent events which affect their lives nowadays. For instance, during my fieldwork in 2017–2018, only one informant from the informal sector referred to the 2005 Operation *Murambatsvina*, one of the most notorious and destructive recent government interventions in the informal sector. Third, 2013–2018 were important years for Zimbabwean politics and the economy. It followed a relative and short-lived improvement and stabilisation of the economy during the GNU. The 2013 elections also, as Brian Raftopoulos argued, signified ‘the end of an era’ of civic and political opposition politics which rose from the late 1990s and contested the hegemony of ZANU–PF. At the same time, it was a period of the rise of popular protest movements and informal sector organisations which shaped new political routes and interactions, and these are also crucial to consider when discussing the changes in citizenship among people with informal sector livelihoods.

I conducted the field research for this thesis in two stages. The first stage took place between late June and mid-September 2016 during my master’s studies. I conducted over 80 interviews of 25–100 minutes each. It coincided with the period of intense political contestation

and popular uprising in Harare when people expressed their discontent with economic hardships, corruption and political oppression through participation in popular protest movements and stayaways. The major focus of this fieldwork was informal sector organisations and their relationship with other civic and political actors.

The second stage of fieldwork was conducted from mid-December 2017 to mid-May 2018 during my doctoral studies when I undertook around 130 interviews of 30–120 minutes. This was also a critical period for post-2013 Zimbabwe, from the November 2017 coup d'état (also known as Operation Restore Legacy or, in the west, the 'soft coup' [*Herald*, 2017b; Chikowore and Davis, 2017; Pilling, 2017]), when after the intervention of the Zimbabwe Defence Forces President Robert Mugabe was forced to resign and President Emmerson Mnangagwa assumed power, and until the July 2018 elections when his power was formally legitimised. The focus of this fieldwork was much wider and deeper and looked at broader experiences of informal sector actors and processes which inform them. I also took a closer look at the approaches of political actors, such as the government, local authorities, and political parties to the informal sector and civic actors, including trade unions, NGOs and protests movements.

In my research, I relied on qualitative research methods and a variety of data sources, including interviews, mass media publications, social media publications, Zimbabwean dancehall songs, and official documents. All these were analysed using discourse and qualitative content analysis. Qualitative data and research methods are crucial for studying subtle political processes, such as changes in the understanding and practices of lived citizenship as they are 'fundamentally well suited for locating the *meanings* people place on the events, processes, and structures of their lives and for connecting these meanings to the *social world* around them' (Miles, Huberman and Saldana, 2014, p.11).³

³ Emphasis in the original.

The principal research method was the open-ended semi-structured interview. As Matthew Miles, Michael Huberman and Johnny Saldana (2014, p. 190) stress, the goal of the interview is to ‘gather enough data to answer the question “*What may be going through a person’s mind as he or she experiences a particular series of actions and/or reflects on an experience?*” This includes not just facts but reasoning, memories, and emotions as well’.⁴ In my fieldwork, I attempted to stick to this goal whenever it was possible. While some interviews, for example, with the City Council’s technocrats and leaders of some civil society organisations, were more focused on facts and reasoning behind certain decisions, the majority of interviews were centred around ideas, practices, experiences, perceptions, and memories of political and socio-economic phenomena. Most of the interviews were recorded using a digital voice recorder with the permission of respondents. For both recorded and unrecorded interview, I took detailed notes. I safely stored both the recordings and the notes in encrypted files.

In many instances, the format of interviews, especially with people who earned a living from the informal sector, was that of oral histories in which respondents narrated their life histories highlighting key events in their lives, explaining the challenges they faced, reflecting upon the causes of economic and political development in Zimbabwe and their meanings for them and their families, challenging or reinforcing the foundations of urban modernity, and understandings and experiences of citizenship. As Michael Jackson (2013, p. 14) rightfully notes, ‘... storytelling can transform our experience, stir out emotions, and facilitate action without the mediation of conceptual thought and in *opposition to official narratives*’.⁵

While it might be argued that narratives of individuals about their lives and experiences as members of Zimbabwe’s and Harare’s political communities are only isolated individual instances of a person’s citizenship understandings and practices, Hannah Arendt (1998 [1958]) notes that there is always human plurality since a person is a unique individual and a member

⁴ Emphasis in the original.

⁵ Emphasis in the original.

of a community at the same time and that private and public domains in which human experiences take place are always intertwined and interact with each other, what she calls the 'subjective-in-between'. Similarly, Jackson (2013, p. 15) reminds that 'when one tells stories... one is never simply giving voice to what is on one's own mind or in one's own interest; one is realising, or objectifying, one's own experience in ways that others can relate to through experiences of their own'. The transformations in the understanding of citizenship voiced by my respondents, therefore, are diverse and should be seen in the broader context of socio-economic and political processes that have occurred in Zimbabwe.

My respondents came from a variety of backgrounds. During my first round of fieldwork, my key respondents were leaders and members (8–10 from each organisation) of three ISOs: the Zimbabwe Chamber of Informal Economy Associations (ZCIEA), National Vendors Union of Zimbabwe (NAVUZ), and Zimbabwe Informal Sector Organisation (ZISO). ZCIEA was selected as a case study as it was the oldest and most established ISO in Zimbabwe and was linked to the Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions (ZCTU) – a once-powerful labour movement (WIEGO, n.d.b). NAVUZ was chosen since it became very active politically in 2015–2016 with its members, and particularly its leader, Sten Zvorwadza, staging protests and demonstrations and 'making the news' (*NewsDay*, 2015c). ZISO was selected since its leader, Promise Mkwanzani, was also a leader of the #Tajamuka popular protest movement, and I expected to find connections in terms of political mobilisation between #Tajamuka and ZISO. Respondents from ISOs included both women and men, of different age groups, living and working in different areas of Harare, and operating in different sectors of the informal economy. The core difference among respondents from different ISOs was that NAVUZ respondents were all vendors operating from the CBD (which is explained by the nature of the organisation) while ZISO and ZCIEA respondents also included cross-border traders and small-scale producers most of whom operated in their townships. I would stop interviewing people from an ISO once I reached the saturation point, and the responses became repetitive.

During both fieldwork stages, I interviewed people who operated in the informal sector well beyond the three ISOs mentioned above. It was necessary to gain a better understanding of the informal sector, associational life in the informal sector, and experiences of citizenship. I identified informants through different ISOs and NGOs, research assistants and personal networks. I interviewed both men and women; vendors, cross-border traders and producers; people from different age groups; those who had experience in the formal economy and those who operated informally most of their lives.

All my respondents from the informal sector were self-employed, did not receive wages, and were not involved in criminal activities as a source of income. It is also crucial to note that I refer to them as ‘informal sector actors’, ‘people (who earn a living) in the informal sector’ or ‘people with informal sector livelihoods’ to recognise their relationship with and contribution to the informal sector. I avoid using common terms, such as ‘informals’ or ‘illegal vendors’ as I see them as stigmatising. To avoid confusion, I also refrain from calling them ‘informal sector workers’ as most of my respondents did not see their economic activities as ‘work’ and because they were non-wage operators.

Other groups of respondents I interviewed included representatives of NGOs, trade unions, religious organisations; Harare councillors and City Council technocrats; opposition politicians and government workers; and economy and politics experts. Interviews with these people were crucial for the understanding of attitudes and policies of various organisations and institutions to the informal sector and the interpretation of different political and economic processes that have occurred in Zimbabwe.

Ethical considerations require that in politically challenging environments, the identity of informants should be protected. Considering the history of political violence in Zimbabwe and the continuous victimisation of people in the informal sector, I changed the names of all my respondents who earned a living from the informal sector. In addition, some representatives of organisations preferred to stay anonymous (for example, a representative from a residents’

association, a former government employee, and an employee from a governmental financial institution), and changed their names as well.

The majority of the interviews were conducted in English. Some interviews with NAVUZ members in 2016 were conducted in Shona, and my assistant and interpreter Gabriel helped me greatly with translation. In 2018, I also had limited assistance from my guide Favor who helped me interview several respondents in Budiriro and Glenview. Both research assistants were recruited through my academic networks, had experience in assisting with research and were briefed about research ethics and confidentiality. Both Gabriel and Favor were Zimbabweans, Harare residents from high-density suburbs and were involved in informal sector activities themselves. They could easily connect with my respondents due to their backgrounds. They helped me interview those respondents who were not confident with speaking English and identify several respondents from their communities as well, adding to my snowball sampling.

My positionality as a researcher should also be taken into account. Categories, like race, class, gender, ability and nationality, have a strong impact on research (Manohar et al, 2017). The fact that I am a white young Russian UK-educated woman both aided and limited my research. It was easy for me to establish a trusting relationship with many women respondents who were willing to speak openly about hardships that women face in the informal sector. It was also easy for me to connect with recent school and university graduates, and young people in general were ready to share their experiences as the youth in Harare. Being a foreigner also helped me conduct extensive research with informal sector organisations. As my colleagues in Harare suggested, it might have been harder to do for a Zimbabwean due to politicisation, a partisan divide, and trust issues. As I was an outsider and, in 2016, a newcomer, it was clear that I was not linked to any political party. When I came to Harare first in 2016, I was not well-familiar with the city, the culture, and especially with the nature of the informal sector. This may be seen both as a disadvantage and as an advantage. On the one hand, it took a lot of time

and effort (both from my respondents, friends, and myself) to familiarise me with the context. On the other hand, as I was an outsider, my respondents were willing to share their experiences in the informal sector in detail so that I could have a better grasp of the issues in the informal sector and politics. My positionality also partly limited my research methods: it was not possible for me to blend in at markets or in the streets, and consequently, I could not easily use observation or participant observation as research methods, which might have been useful for my study. Also, due to political tensions in 2016 and coming elections in 2018, I had limited access to the government and ZANU–PF as they were not easily approachable despite the seeming opening up of politics after the coup. While I recognise my privilege as a white researcher, as a female researcher I faced the challenges of sexual(ised) harassment which is common for female fieldworkers, particularly during ethnographic fieldwork (Kloß, 2016), and it partly limited my fieldwork activities: I was not always able to informally network alone to recruit new respondents or conduct interviews in informal settings.

Another data source the value of which for this study cannot be overestimated is the lyrics of Zimbabwe dancehall songs. This urban music genre dates back to the 1990s and builds upon Jamaican dancehall and reggae. One of its distinct characteristics is that it is associated with the youth and subaltern groups (Kufakurinani and Mwatwara, 2017; Ureke and Washaya, 2016). It is one of the methods that politically and economically excluded groups may use to voice their grievances: ‘dancehall music, as part of wider popular culture, is the main avenue through which society’s marginalised groups can be heard’ (Ureke and Washaya, 2016, p. 70). As Ushehweu Kufakurinani and Wesley Mwatwara (2017, p. 37) note, Zimdancehall is similar to dancehall and shares common characteristics, e.g. ‘its danceability, the impressive vocal deftness of its performers, and its sometimes extremely sexually explicit and/or violent lyrics’ (Skjelbo, 2015, p. 136). The development of this music genre coincided in time with the economic crisis, informalisation, and political polarisation and violence between the ruling ZANU–PF and opposition MDC (Kufakurinani and Mwatwara, 2017). This music genre is

produced and consumed largely by the youth (Kufakurinani and Mwatwara, 2017), and it is estimated that at least 60% of Zimbabwean music listeners listen to Zimdancehall (Templeman, 2014).

My research assistant Peter⁶ who was very familiar with the genre, selected ten Zimdancehall songs that addressed the issues of the informal sector and translated the lyrics into English. Unfortunately, I cannot reproduce the translated lyrics in the thesis as they are protected by copyright. I have had to paraphrase the content of the song lyrics without losing the narratives' meanings for the purposes of the thesis. Analysing the lyrics enriches the understanding of the problems of young people who face economic informality as a defining characteristic of their life and livelihood.

I also turned to a range of written sources during my fieldwork. One category of written data was a range of official documents and publications of NGOs, political parties and other institutions. These allowed me to see the declared policies, attitudes, and goals presented by different actors in relation to the informal sector. Also, I obtained some advertising material from ZCIEA and NAVUZ which gave a glimpse into how ISOs presented themselves during the recruitment of new members and shared information about their programmes with members.

I used a variety of mass media publications from pro-government and private newspapers and news websites for two purposes. First, since my access to the ZANU–PF and government was rather limited, I used reports and mass media publications to compensate for this methodological limitation and fill in some data gaps. Second, I studied mass media publications to see what narratives were created and popularised by both pro-government and private newspapers regarding urban development and the informal sector. Although mass

⁶ Like Gabriel and Favor, Peter was recruited via my academic network in Harare.

media publications do not necessarily reflect public opinion, they have the power to shape it in accordance with the interests of the elites.

Finally, in several instances, I turned to social media sources, *Twitter*, *WhatsApp* and *Facebook*, to complement the abovementioned data. Zimbabweans have extensively used these platforms to express their grievances and attitudes towards economic informality. What is important to keep in mind though is that despite the almost ubiquitous availability of smartphones in urban areas, a US\$3 monthly fee for access to WhatsApp (similar to other social media) is expensive for the vast majority of urbanites who have precarious informal sector livelihoods in the grave economic conditions of Zimbabwe. As a result, permanent access to various social media may be seen as a privilege of those who are employed or earn enough money from the informal sector (Karekwaivanane and Mare, 2019).

There are ethical considerations for the use of data from social media which have not yet been resolved by the academic community and social media companies. It is unclear whether social media publications refer to the public or private realm; whether the copyright belongs to an author of a particular publication or a social network; whether users are aware that their publications may be used for research purposes; whether they consider a possibility of whether they are in a clear or vulnerable state of mind when they post on social media; not to mention that it is challenging to obtain informed consent from users to use their social media publications in research (Ahmed, Bath and Demartini, 2017). To avoid the ethical muddy waters related to the use of social media publications, I avoid quoting the publications I use in the thesis in full and do not identify specific users. While this poses limitations on the study, it does not damage the overall research since social media is used as a supplementary data source in this particular case to merely reinforce the arguments which I make using other data.

The combination of these research methods and data sources allows me to conduct a comprehensive study of the impact of economic informalisation on the understanding and experiences of citizenship in urban Zimbabwe. The use of diverse sources compensates for

certain research limitations while anonymisation of respondents removes potential risks of political persecution of respondents.

§4. THESIS ARGUMENT AND OUTLINE

The argument of the thesis consists of two interlocked parts. First, the thesis shows that economic informalisation resulted in a major socio-political rupture – a disconnect between the modernist thinking which was shaped from colonial times and dominated urban life and the survivalist reality which virtually every person experienced and had to face since the late 1990s. In this context, many modernist ideas, ideals, behaviours, and lifestyle were no longer attainable, which became a source of grievances for many people who now relied on the informal sector as a source of livelihood. The modernist mindset, however, dictated many of the approaches, policies, and actions of the government, local authorities, political parties, civil society, and even ordinary people in the informal sector which led to marginalisation and stigmatisation of informal sector actors.

Second, the thesis argues that all these processes led to slow but steady transformations in the ideas and practices of citizenship among informal sector actors. The ideas and practices of citizenship have roots in the same modernist assumptions of who a ‘proper’ urban citizen is and are linked to the notions of productivity, taxation, residence, and formal employment. However, as people start to re-evaluate modernist assumptions and incorporate them into the survivalist reality, they also started questioning these foundations of citizenship and engaged in the discussion of alternatives to these modernist foundations of citizenship in the context of radical economic informalisation.

This Chapter introduced the topic, outlined key theoretical frameworks within the thesis topic and argument (the informal sector, citizenship, and the divide between the modernist

mindset and survivalist reality), explained the methodology of the research, and outlined the argument of the thesis.

Chapter 2 looks at the evolution of urban development and policies or urban control in Harare from 1890 until the late 1990s. It demonstrates that the settler community and colonial administration has been implementing stringent policies of urban order and control from early on to ensure the control of the African labour force and enforce colonial ideas of urban modernity and respectability as an expression of modernity. Those people who fell short of such ideals or whose labour was not needed in Salisbury were not tolerated in the city. This led to two trajectories of changes in the practices of citizenship among black urbanites. Middle-class Africans adopted the notions of modernity and used them, albeit unsuccessfully, to make a claim to equal citizenship with white settlers. Meanwhile, many black labourers, unemployed people, women and squatters engaged in economic activities which were not tolerated by the colonial administrations – informal trade, manufacturing, or beer-brewing to earn a living and create social mobility opportunities, which may be seen as instances of insurgent citizenship which was one of main types of lived citizenship at the time among Africans. A similar pattern continued after Independence as the black majority government continued to enforce these modernity ideas and ideals in urban politics.

Chapter 3 focuses on the disconnect between the modernist mindset and survivalist reality in the context of the profound economic crisis and radical informalisation after 1998. It argues that this disconnect has had a significant impact on different spheres of social and political life in Zimbabwe. The Chapter discusses the crisis of ZANU–PF’s modernising development politics and how under the impact of the mindset–reality disconnect it led to the ‘back to the future’ vision of Zimbabwe’s development path when people idealised the pre-crisis past and saw it as the goal for the future of the country. It also turns to urban issues and studies the emergence and persistence of the narrative of Harare no longer being the Sunshine City as the modernist urban ideal collapsed under the impact of the economic and political crisis. Then,

the Chapter turns to social dimensions of the disconnect and suggests that it is manifested in the problematic issue of the notion of ‘work’ in the informal sector and the lack of work identity among individuals with informal sector livelihoods as ‘work’ has historically been seen in the context of formal employment. Slowly and gradually, however, this notion has been challenged. Finally, the Chapter unravels the education–employment disconnect as another manifestation of the mindset–reality divide. While education has served as a social mobility path and an avenue to urban modernity and respectability from the colonial period, the lack of employment opportunities eroded that notion. As a result, young people who graduated from schools and universities and were unemployed started questioning the modernity and respectability premises upon which a significant part of the ideas and lived citizenship practices in urban areas has been based.

Chapter 4 looks at the attitudes and policies towards the informal sector proposed and implemented by the government, local authorities and political parties after the late 1990s when informalisation intensified and especially in 2013–2018 and considers people’s responses to such approaches. It suggests that the core high-level political actors have become trapped in the mindset–reality disconnect and perpetuated the ideas of post-colonial urban modernity. The government and the ruling party have had an ambivalent attitude to the informal sector. On the one hand, they have extensively used biopolitical stigmatisation to label and further marginalise ‘bad’ informal sector activities (e.g. unregistered street vendors in the CBD). On the other hand, there have been institutions meant to facilitate and uplift informal sector businesses, especially those related to production and manufacturing, albeit not without patronage and corruption. All these measures were constantly accompanied by evictions and depriving people of livelihoods which the government did not consider worthy. The approach of the opposition parties, especially the MDC has also been unfavourable to the informal sector as opposition politicians were similarly preoccupied with the revival of the formal economy frequently at the expense of short-term improvements in the informal sector. The MDC-dominated Harare City

Council has also had limited desire, abilities, and resources to meaningfully engage with the informal sector and ease people's hardships. In this rather hostile political environment, many people chose to partly disengage from the state and focus on the survival and development of their businesses. Some individuals even took up the functions of the government and local authorities in providing public services to their neighbours. These practices signify the shift towards self-reliant citizenship which became a dominant type of lived citizenship in the context of radical economic informalisation and deep economic crisis. Some of these lived citizenship practices may also be interpreted as insurgent citizenship, for example, when street vendors operate in the CBD and reclaim their right to the city. At the same time, self-reliant lived citizenship is not a neoliberal separation of the state and citizens as informal sector actors aspire for the productive and beneficial return of the state into their lives and rely on the government and political parties to uplift the economy and reverse economic informalisation in the future as explored in the previous Chapter. In the meantime, people resorted to non-confrontational adaptive resistance to sustain their families and withstand frequently harmful interventions and practices of the government, local authorities, and political parties in the informal sector.

Chapter 5 looks at how different civil society actors (trade unions, NGOs, religious organisations, and popular protest movements) adapted to economic informalisation. It argues that economic informalisation as well as the broader economic decline, politicisation of the civil society, political oppression and violence, and reduction of donor funding played a negative role in the civil society. While trade unions used to be strong civil society actors which successfully stood for workers' rights and relied on the notion of collectivity, they lost a lot of their members due to informalisation and the shrinking of the formal economy. They were exclusive and did not incorporate the growing informal sector into their organisation. However, they facilitated the establishment of ZCIEA which represented the informal sector. Some NGOs attempted to align their programmes with the needs of the informal sector. However, broader political and economic processes limited their activities and abilities. Churches and church-based

organisations were also affected as donations declined with growing poverty. However, they attempted to support their members in the informal sector through training, financial support, and psychological support. Despite the hardships of NGOs and religious organisations, their expensive civic and political activity in the 1990s and 2000s shaped and reinforced the classic rights-based understanding of citizenship. Popular protest (or hashtag, or social) movements were new civic and political actors which emerged after 2013. While vast economic informalisation was the reality in which they operated from the start, their attitude to the informal sector was predominantly instrumental. Overall, in the mainstream civil society, very few organisations spoke directly to the needs of informal sector actors and represented them.

Chapter 6 considers the strong impact associational life in the informal sector has on the ideas and practices of lived citizenship. It focuses on informal sector organisations as novel civic and political actors and specific notions of citizenship they shape among their members. It considers three organisations: ZCIEA, NAVUZ, and ZISO which were particularly active and visible after 2013 and before the 2017 coup d'état, particularly in 2016–2017 during the broader civic and political awakening. These organisations emerged due to transformations in the political and civic terrain caused by economic informalisation discussed in Chapters 4 and 5 and on the basis of more established civil society organisations. They combated the marginalisation of the informal sector by the government, local authorities, and mass media through different forms of governmental and non-governmental politics. In the course of this struggle and through processes of self-formation during training, networking, and collective action, organisations incentivised their members to become capable, independent, and self-reliant citizens. The sources of citizenship vary and are grounded in the earlier civic activism, modernity ideals, organisational characteristics and collective identities of these ISOs, and include collectivity-based, rights-based, and 'respectability'-based citizenship respectively, all of which affect people's political stance, engagement with authorities, and self-perception as citizens.

Chapter 7 looks at how informal sector actors have engaged in constructing evolving notions of citizenship from below and challenged the top-down approach to citizenship which has served as a basis for the modernist expectations of individuals, which the state can no longer deliver. It suggests that economic informalisation, in the ways shown in previous chapters, has been slowly affecting individuals' modernist mindset and the understanding of and practices of lived citizenship linked to it. The contours of lived citizenship have been changing as individuals debated and challenged the pre-requisites for 'good' citizenship, such as formal employment, productivity, and taxation. At the same time, people have re-imagined other dimensions of citizenship, such as informal residence. In the contested political environment and volatile economic situation, ideas and practices of lived citizenship have acquired characteristics specific to the country's economic context. They have been departing from the previous rigid modernist understanding of citizenship when a 'proper' urban citizen was the one who had a formal job and contributed to the economy. After 2013, informal sector actors have started to challenge these assumptions about citizenship, which were imposed from above by the colonial administration and later the ZANU–PF government and which have been previously embraced at the societal level. Although these changes have been slow and not pervasive, they signify a potential for the erosion of the colonial and post-colonial modernist urban and economic ideals.

Chapter 8 concludes the thesis by making the argument that economic informalisation has had a dramatic impact on the contours of lived citizenship. As citizens, people have become self-reliant and even perform the duties of local authorities; however, since modernist convictions still exist and penetrate economic and political life, individuals in the informal sector aspire for the government and local authorities to kickstart the economy and stimulate economic development and formalisation. Their understanding of citizenship parts from the colonial and earlier post-colonial notions and challenges the modernist ideas about the formal economy, residence, education, productivity, and taxation. When individuals participate in the associational life of the informal sector, their understanding of citizenship undergoes further

changes and acquires a new focus specific to an informal sector organisation which further affects her/his political views, relationship with political actors, and position in society. The conclusion ends with an outline of experiences of citizenship in the informal sector under Mnangagwa's government and prospects for ideas and practices of lived citizenship in Harare's informal sector.

CHAPTER 2.

HISTORY AND POLITICS OF URBAN DEVELOPMENT AND INFORMAL SECTOR IN HARARE

§1. INTRODUCTION

This Chapter looks at the history and politics of urban development and economic informality in Zimbabwe and their impact on the ideas and practices of citizenship from the establishment of Fort Salisbury until the onset of the crisis of the late 1990s. This history is essential to understand as these practices have informed subsequent politics towards the informal sector. This Chapter argues that, firstly, the foundations of the modernist mindset which dictated and justified restrictive policies towards the use of the urban space were being laid and strengthened from early colonial times and were perpetuated with little change after Independence. Secondly, the Chapter suggests that tight control of the urban space and access to the city (with sporadic loosening of restrictions) by both the colonial administration and post-colonial Zimbabwe African National Union–Patriotic Front (ZANU–PF) government shaped two kinds of citizens. Some partly internalised the notions of urban modernity and order (this is particularly visible in the African middle class during the colonial period) and perpetuated the politics of policing the use of the urban space and ‘un-modern’ behaviours. The other group of citizens engaged in citizenship practices which allowed them to earn a living, become economically empowered, erode the restrictive policies of urban modernity, and even take up the functions of local authorities – all these are manifested in various informal economic activities which black urbanites have been practising from the early colonial period.

The Chapter focuses on four core periods in the history of urban development and politics in Harare. First, it considers early urban development in the colonial era between 1890 and the late 1920s and discusses how the foundations of the ‘modern’ city were established in Salisbury and how the groups that were considered ‘undesirable’ and not belonging to the city were identified and marginalised. Then, it proceeds to discuss the changes in urban policies and urban control of the African population in 1930–1965 when the colonial administration and

white elites used segregation as a major tool to limit African urbanites' right to the city and deny full citizenship to the burgeoning African middle class. Further, the chapter looks at the politics of urban development and control during the Unilateral Declaration of Independence (UDI) period and liberation struggle when the migration to urban areas intensified and the government could no longer effectively limit the use of the city space. Finally, it looks at the post-colonial urban development in the 1980s and 1990s and considers the continuations and disruptions of post-colonial urban political practices of marginalising people whose livelihoods were in the informal sector.

There has been extensive research on the establishment and development of urban Zimbabwe from colonial times. It is comprised of different, albeit closely connected, approaches to the studies of urbanity and informality. I use these secondary sources as a basis for understanding how the ideas and ideals of modernity shaped the social, economic, and political characteristics of Harare and how they affected the ideas and practices of citizenship of Harare residents. I analyse this literature from the perspective of lived citizenship of Harare residents and discuss what kind of citizen the colonial and early post-colonial states attempted to create and how urban dwellers, particularly those involved in various informal sector activities, challenged the notions of citizenship that were imposed on them.

It has been suggested that 'Zimbabwe's cities have historically been viewed as rigidly holding on to formality while informality has gradually entered urban spaces since the beginning of an acute and ongoing socio-economic and political crisis in 2000' (Muchadenyika, Chakamba and Mguni, 2018, p. 125). In African settler colonies, colonial administrations, missionaries, and employers have sought to maintain order in urban areas and beyond, discipline the labour force, and control particular groups of people whom they viewed as a menace, including 'loose' women, 'idle' men, hawkers, and street vendors (White, 1987; Willis, 1991; Elbourne, 1994; Martens, 2003; Burton, 2005). Colonial legislation and punitive practices in Southern Rhodesia established that the right to be in the city was conditional upon the

existence of a work contract and compliance with restrictive mobility regulations (Alexander, 2012; Barnes, 1992, 1999). In order to understand the changes that occurred to the ideas and practices of lived citizenship among people with urban informal sector livelihoods, it is essential to track the changes in urban politics of control and ideas of modernity from the onset of urbanisation in Zimbabwe. The Chapter emphasises that despite the sporadic loosening of urban regulations on housing and informal livelihoods, overall policies and approaches towards any expressions of informality were tight from early colonial times. This restrictiveness resulted from the need of the colonisers to control the African labour force and the colonial vision of modernity and what a modern city should look like and, most importantly, what it should not look like, what parts of it should be made invisible. The colonial notions of modernity and respectability as a manifestation of modernity brought in by colonisers and missionaries played a crucial role in the establishment and development of Salisbury as an economic, social, and political urban space, although the reasons for restrictive policies on informality varied depending on the political goals of the ruling groups.

§2. URBAN POLITICS AND CONTROL IN HARARE DURING THE EARLY COLONIAL PERIOD (1890–1920s)

Urban politics in Southern Rhodesia was based on British settler-colonial ideas of economic exploitation, control of migration of Africans to urban areas, the use of the urban space by Africans, and modern urban planning. This had significant implications for Africans' experiences of citizenship, particularly, the right to the city, which was only granted to 'respectable' people and 'legitimate' businesses, as defined by the colonial administration to serve the interests of white businessmen and the settler community. This approach, however, was perpetually challenged and reconsidered by African residents of Salisbury whose experiences of lived citizenship often differed from what the colonial administration and white

elite wanted those to be and who engaged in various practices of insurgent citizenship as a form of lived citizenship.

What started as cultural and economic encounters, often initiated by Christian missionaries who were human transmitters of western culture and modernity and gradually tied Africans to the culture of the colonisers through continuous cultural and economic transactions (Comaroff, 1985; Comaroff and Comaroff, 1997), soon turned into a brutal and ruthless colonial conquest with the establishment of the British South Africa Company which had full colonising powers (Blake, 1977, p. 54). The military hand of the British South Africa Company, the Pioneer Column, founded Fort Salisbury in 1890 as a frontier settlement and beachhead to facilitate the colonisation of the interior lands and control African labour mobility (Yoshikuni, 2007, p. 9). The violent nature of the colonial conquest and racial foundations of economic, political, and cultural relations of exploitation, power, and control were core factors that underpinned urban development in the subsequent years.

With the development of transport infrastructure, commerce, and economic growth in the late 1900s–early 1910s, the demand for cheap African labour in Salisbury increased. The town grew and developed rapidly during this period: construction flourished, and public services (piped water and electricity) were introduced. Businesses proliferated with larger ones upgrading their premises. New buildings were ‘monuments to the commencement of a modern, competitive business era’ (Yoshikuni, 2007, p. 12). The business centre of Salisbury developed at that period as well. As Tsuneo Yoshikuni indicated, commerce, finance, and government in Salisbury started working closely together, and investment and planning shifted from short-term to long-term at that time: ‘the town’s key enterprises, having access to the benefits of an expanding urban infrastructure, began to commit themselves more to the future of the colony’ (Yoshikuni, 2007, pp. 12–13). Residential areas changed less, but the first residential suburb developed near the business centre. Wealthier residents occupied the area north of the business centre (now known as the Avenues area adjacent to the Central Business District [CBD]). The

north-eastern area, Greenwood, adjacent to the business centre also developed and became a middle- and upper-class suburb.

At the same time, the ‘poor white’ problem emerged as rapidly growing urban Rhodesia was attracting workers and unemployed men from South Africa, the economy of which was in depression. The attitude of the colonial administration and white businessmen to poor white men was negative and stigmatising: ‘... a casual is now looked upon askance... he is usually met with a frown and told to clear... along the railways these men are to be met within numbers that would astonish the town dweller... a pest and nuisance...’ (*Rhodesia Herald* quoted in Yoshikuni, 2007, p. 13). Still, the colonial administration and white businessmen regarded the presence and visibility of Africans in town as a more significant threat to order, modernity and power. Both concerns were framed as a ‘public nuisance’ narrative. Initial concerns and complaints about the ‘nuisance’ caused by African businesses in Salisbury city centre started appearing as early as the 1900s. The ‘public nuisance’ narrative produced by the colonial administration and spread by the media became dominant when expressing the settler community attitude towards African traders (Wild, 1991, p. 178–179). The settler community and administration clearly demonstrated that not everyone had the right to the city, that it was a privilege that was only extended to those ‘deserving’ or ‘useful’ to the economy, and it was the white elite who had the power to set the boundaries of citizenship in Salisbury.

Brian Raftopoulos and Tsuneo Yoshikuni called early colonial towns ‘the sites of struggle’ characterising the colonial politics of exploitation and control of Africans (Raftopoulos and Yoshikuni, 1999). On the one hand, there was a call to preserve urban areas as ‘white cities’. On the other hand, there was a growing need for cheap labour (Yoshikuni, 2007). This contradiction led to the segregation of residential and business areas. As Sabelo Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2009, p. 61) suggests, ‘the early colonial state introduced many measures in its endeavour to create a racially bifurcated colony, dotted with white cities’. The most notable case of segregation of residential areas and control of the presence of Africans in the city was

the creation of the location. The location started around 1892 when Salisbury was just a frontier settlement. In 1907, the Town Council of Salisbury formally opened the location outside town which later became the Harare African Township: in 1908 the Council ordered that all Africans in Salisbury, except those living in their employers' facilities, had to permanently move into that area.⁷ Residence in town officially became illegal for Africans (Yoshikuni, 2007, p. 9). At first, the idea of urban segregation was brought from the Cape Colony, and its institutionalisation was motivated by racist and segregationist views of settler citizens, such as the Black Peril,⁸ as well as the poorly controlled urban residence of Africans in town. The overall idea of housing intervention was in line with an ideal of colonial urban modernity perpetuated by British colonisers and was supposed to control the growing urban African population for economic and political purposes and to help identify and control all those whom the colonisers considered 'delinquent' African urbanites, vagrants, and loafers – a function which was partly performed by the labour contract system which limited mobility of Africans (Yoshikuni, 2007). At that time, urban Africans were not massively moved into the location as housing there was developing slowly. Africans usually lived not in public housing but on their employers' premises, and segregationist plans could not yet be fully applied (Ibid.).

In the coming years, the location underwent significant developments as both an urban African settlement and a colonial institution designed to exercise control over the colonised and became a key site in which the ideas and practices of lived citizenship were shaped. In the late 1900s–1910s, there were harsher residence restrictions for Africans living in town. In 1909, a church reserve near the location area was introduced. In 1913, a superintendent position was created occupied by a white colonial administrator to control the life of Africans in the location instead of an African headman. In 1913–1920, the Durban system was introduced: the local authorities' monopoly over African beer produced and consumed in the location was

⁷ Now called Mbare. For the contemporary geographic location on the map of Harare, see Figure 1.

⁸ A moral panic and fear shared by white settlers, which translated into relevant legislation, that black men were sexually attracted to and could sexually assault white women (see McCulloch, 2000).

established, which became the source of finance for the costly political administration. Provision of public housing in the location allowed to further limit the freedoms of urban Africans. At the same time, it concentrated everyday grievances of Africans in this physical space which resulted in the location becoming the primary site of social movements which peaked after World War I when women protested the municipal monopoly over the production and sale of beer. Earlier, the primary form of protest against policies in the location was resettlement from the location to areas outside Salisbury. After the war, protests moved into the physical and social space of the location, thus shaping the community of urban Africans (Yoshikuni, 2007). While the colonial administration and settlers were determined to limit Africans' citizenship and the right to the city, make them as little visible in town as possible, containing them in the location, and designing new ways to economically exploit them, Africans protested and engaged in multiple ways of practising lived citizenship that went outside the boundaries of citizenship set for them by the administration, such as protests, networking, and relocation.

Strict regulation of the life of African urbanites pushed some of them from town to peri-urban areas where they formed new settlements that turned into suburbs and were a significant part of Salisbury until the 1950s. In 1922, the Rhodesian authorities introduced the second location specifically for married African urban dwellers in an attempt to further set spatial boundaries, this time based not only on race but also on the notions of respectability, gender, occupation, and to satisfy the economic needs of employers. Mostly, residents of these suburbs were mission-educated men on long-term labour contracts and their wives who supported their household income from formal employment with fruit and vegetable vending. Residents of these suburbs also managed to accumulate resources to support agricultural production in their rural homes. Overall, a dual urban system was being established in Salisbury among black residents: the town itself was inhabited by proletarians, migrants, and the urban destitute while suburbs were inhabited by mission-educated workers and their families (Yoshikuni, 2007). With time,

this system produced two distinct ideas and practices of citizenship among African urbanites on the basis of their class and residence which are explored in the following section.

Overall, urban development in the early colonial Salisbury laid the foundations of segregationist policy in the urban context, racial differentiation of urban citizenship with full citizenship only granted to and practised by settlers, and notions of urban modernity and order which informed urban policies in the colonial and post-colonial period.

§3. URBAN DEVELOPMENT AND INFORMALITY IN COLONIAL HARARE (1930–1965)

From the 1930s, the government sought to further restrict the presence of Africans in Salisbury through segregation and legislation which limited their right to the city. Since race was the basis for citizenship differentiation, even middle-class Africans who were considered respectable and adopted a western urban lifestyle were denied full citizenship by the colonial administration and settlers. Women were also targeted as one of the major threats to proper urban order. Africans were tolerated in urban areas only as long as their labour was required there. The segregationist politics also, ironically, contributed to the development of nationalism in urban Salisbury which after 1965 led to a new struggle for citizenship.

The 1930s were one of the key periods in the formation of the African urban middle class which employed the concepts of respectability as an expression of modernity and civilisation in the western understanding of these terms and called for broader social mobility for Africans through education. Although Christian missionary education did not intend to make education a social mobility tool, colonial subjects soon realised that it was one of the very few methods of reaching a higher level in society. Those colonial subjects who had access to education used, by far and most, a functionalist approach to it (West, 2002). As William T. Madeya, a high school student, wrote in 1942, '[education] is a passport to success; it is the provision for old age; hence we get from it knowledge which is power' (quoted in West, 2002,

p. 36). Michael West (2002, p. 37) suggests that ‘the quest for literacy, education, and civilization— translated into a better life, materially and socially— was the driving force behind the rise of an African middle class in Southern Rhodesia’. Education, therefore, was an integral part of the colonial idea of modernity as it was connected to the ideas of civilisation and respectability, was linked to political rights as the franchise was limited by literacy (as well as property) requirements, and was a pathway to the most prestigious white collar jobs (West, 2002).

Common citizenship based on class was still denied to elite African urbanites even though they met the respectability criteria for urban citizenship since race was the primary criterion for granting or denying full citizenship and was at the foundation of the predatory and violent colonial system of economic exploitation in Southern Rhodesia. Some elite Africans in Salisbury and Bulawayo appealed to the notion of respectability as a specific form of modernity demanding social mobility opportunities and decent treatment of middle-class Africans and argued that ‘civilised natives [were] being unfairly treated’: they argued that educated and qualified Africans ‘were not given a better chance of rising to a higher level so that those who are backward [could] see what a civilised man deserve[d]’ (*Native Mirror* quoted in West, 2002, p. 19).⁹ Around the same time, African minister Rev Matthew Rusike also called for better opportunities and pay to those Africans who had ‘qualifications and ability’. Appealing to the notion of respectability, he also called for the improvement of black hospitals and providing facilities for those (‘respectable’) patients who needed more privacy (West, 2002, p. 20). As other elite Africans, he also objected to the use of Kitchen Kaffir¹⁰ which was humiliating to the black petty bourgeoisie while many whites insisted on its use while speaking with all Africans whom they deemed incapable of mastering English (Ibid.).

As Michael West (2002, p. 21) suggests,

⁹ Quotes from a letter of J.H. Sobantu (who later became a prominent entrepreneur) to the *Bulawayo Chronicle* which was forwarded to the *Native Mirror* (West, 2002, p. 19, 243).

¹⁰ A pidgin language that was mostly used in mines in South Africa, Zimbabwe and Zambia.

in a society in which both the policies of the government and the private actions of the dominant race promoted a social levelling of the entire colonised population, without regard to class, elite Africans scanned the horizon for any sign of settler recognition of their claim to a common citizenship and mutual standards of cultural refinement.

In the mid-1930s, elite urban Africans started objecting to the use of the word 'native' which started with resentment of the title 'Native', used by the Native Affairs Department, instead of 'Mr', 'Mrs' and 'Miss' which were used in correspondence with whites. This issue was closely linked to the notion of respectability which was crucial to the African middle-class consciousness. Middle-class Africans argued that the use of the word 'Native' in official communication was offensive – a claim that was dismissed by colonial officials as irrelevant (West, 2002, p. 29–30).¹¹ As West (2002, p. 21) notes, middle-class Africans were losing the battle for respectability as the settler community and administration 'took delight in humiliating these striving Africans'.

In the second half of the 1930s, Rhodesia was approaching a period of rapid industrialisation and urbanisation. Many Africans moved to urban areas in search of employment. This influx provoked an emergence of a new discourse regarding the threat the Africans supposedly presented to the settler community and a shift in the attitudes of white Rhodesians towards urban Africans which further limited Africans' citizenship in urban areas. Once again, a demonising, dehumanising and stigmatising narrative about Africans was created by the colonial administration and magnified by mass media which served as an excuse for keeping Africans away from urban areas or confined in townships. Settlers and the colonial administration were concerned with a potential threat from African urbanites to their political and economic power and the system that enabled the exploitation of Africans. The narrative of the threat 'uncivilised' Africans posed to the modern colonial city stemmed from the ideas of racial superiority, the civilising mission of colonialism and the benefits of colonial modernity, as well as the sense of fear since while settlers were greatly outnumbered by Africans (Mlambo,

¹¹ This practice ended only in 1956 (West, 2002, p. 30).

2019). For instance, in 1937, the Medical Officer of Health pointed out that ‘the future of business, industrial, social and moral life of European Salisbury may be seriously jeopardised’ due to the ‘infiltration’ of the ‘white’ city by Africans and suggested delineating Native Urban Areas in order to control and supervise Africans and limiting their right to reside and own property in town (NAZ RC (1) 41.20.6 R (b) 73002: HM (f) 15/54 (j) 2. MOH to Council: Report on Land Apportionment Act 1930, 7 October 1937 quoted in Wild, 1991, pp. 179–180). A few years later, in 1940, the Prime Minister was quoted to say that ‘the increase of native loafers in the towns had reached disturbing proportions’ (*Rhodesia Herald* quoted in Wild, 1991). Charles Olley, the Mayor of Salisbury, explained that the 1930 Land Appointment Act, which enabled the creation of the Native Urban Areas, was supposed ‘to protect the Europeans against a horrible infiltration of blacks with the ultimate reduction of the civilisation and refinement of the white people who built up the Colony from the wild’ (*Rhodesia Herald* quoted in Wild, 1991, p. 180). The local authorities, however, were not eager to implement this plan as they were concerned with the idea of providing housing to thousands of Africans (Ibid.). The construction and extensive application of the ‘African threat to colonial urban modernity’ narrative justified, in the eyes of the white population, the segregationist policy in Salisbury and allowed for economic exploitation and political oppression.

This had implications for Africans’ lived citizenship. Africans tried to claim their right to the city as many rural Africans moved to Salisbury during the economic depression of the 1930s in search of employment and potential social mobility. However, the colonial administration promptly showed that Africans only had limited rights to be in Salisbury, that the town ‘belonged’ to white settlers, and that Africans were needed and tolerated there only as the low-paid labour force. The 1930s attempts of Africans to claim the right to the city through rural-to-urban migration were closely monitored by the colonial administration and physically restricted.

African trade moved from town into the location. Trade was restricted there because the local authorities did not see it as a typical African residential area – it was considered a living quarter for labour migrants. Trade restrictions in the location meant that African traders operated illegally. In the mid-1930s, the local authorities proposed legalising trade in the location and constructing dealers' stores and a bazaar – these moves were to reduce the movement of Africans to and from town, to remove the African trade from the CBD altogether. Self-employment certificates, however, were still challenging to obtain, and the procedure was meant to control the number of African businesspeople in the location and eliminate 'illegal dwellers' and 'dubious elements' from the business community (Ibid.). Therefore, the rights of even those Africans who had legitimate businesses were restricted and violated which hindered the development of the African business community and uplift of African businessmen and middle class in general (West, 1993).

In the 1940s, the attitude of the government and local authorities towards urban Africans changed: the government now wanted Africans to permanently stay in Salisbury in order to expand labour exploitation, increase their productivity and further boost the Rhodesian economy. The key characteristics of 'proper' urban Africans, as imagined by the Rhodesian government and white settler community, were formal employment, a nuclear family, and respectability with different notions applying to men and women, similarly to other African countries at the time. Anyone who fell short of the ideal imagined African urban citizen was marginalised, criminalised, and excluded from the urban space (Barnes, 1995, 1997; Scarnecchia, 1996; Raftopoulos and Yoshikuni, 1999).

In 1946, the Native Accommodation and Registration Act was adopted with the objective 'to clean up the town' (Wild, 1991). In 1947, Salisbury received the Proclaimed Area status, and the local authorities could evict African traders from town. Only 'established' and 'legitimate' African businesses could operate in town upon obtaining a permit. By 1953, only 13 African businesses legally operated in town. All self-employed Africans regardless of their

operation site had to obtain a certificate which could be refused if an applicant was not 'a fit and proper person' and did not have housing in the Native Urban Area.

Policies towards the informal sector were even harsher. In the 1940s, another wave of backlash against informal trade in town happened. The white administration saw street vendors and hawkers in town as 'a serious nuisance and an inconvenience to pedestrians and road traffic' (NAZ RC (1) C 22.20.10 F (b) 138591; HM (f) 15/77 (j) 1. TC Bulawayo to Secretary for Internal Affairs, 27 July 1942 quoted in Wild, 1991, p. 188). Further restrictive by-laws, which were expected to reduce the number of street vendors in town were not adequate. The local authorities were persistent in clearing the city of vendors and hawkers, and they were moved from town by 1953. Three vending sites remained in town (flowers, food and newspapers), but those were controlled by white businesses employing Africans (Ibid.). In parallel with 'proper' formal businesses, informal traders were banished from the city centre and pushed into townships which, again, significantly limited Africans', particularly poor Africans', right to the city, a livelihood and economic empowerment.

'Loafers' were one of the common targets of the colonial administration and elites who sought to establish control over the labour force and spatially segregate the urban areas. Employers in the 1940s kept complaining about a lack of interest among African men towards formal employment – the attitude that existed specifically towards non-prestigious and hard jobs typically performed by foreign migrants (Scarnecchia, 1993, pp. 54–56). Some of those men attempted to obtain a vending or hawking licence to stay in Salisbury. The Commissioner explained how this scheme worked in the 1940s:

if you go into the location you will find a big cement table with nuts and such produce exposed for sale, but if you try to buy them you won't be able to. Those are the natives who obtain a pass to say they are working on their own behalf. They then go into town and buy sixpence worth of nuts, which they take to the location and put on the table and say 'now I am a hawker' (Phayre quoted in Scarnecchia, 1993, pp. 54–55).

The category of 'loafers' was a part of derogatory narrative employed by white settlers, colonial administration, law enforcement bodies, and mass media to stigmatise those men whom the colonial administration saw as lazy, unemployed, delinquent, and consequently unfit for urban residence (Alexander, 2012, p. 357–358). A large number of urban men could be categorised by the police and magistrates as loafers: a loafer was constructed as being unemployed for at least three months, poorly dressed, having little or no cash on him, and living as a non-paying lodger (Ibid.). Two categories of African men were systematically targeted and labelled as loafers: young educated semi-skilled young men in search of employment that would match their qualifications and unwilling to resort to menial labour and temporary rural visitors who came to Salisbury to see their relatives. However, many men managed to escape from vagrancy swoops by leaving townships where Africans were expected to reside and hiding in European suburbs, for instance, with domestic workers (Ibid.).

It can be concluded that a 'proper' urban African as seen by the colonisers was an African who was convenient to the colonial administration and white settler community; whose labour and economic activities contributed to the Rhodesian economy; whose visible presence in town was kept to a minimum; who resided in a place which was allowed by the colonial administration and local authorities; who conformed to or, even better, internalised modern colonial urban lifestyle and manners (keeping in mind the place in the social and economic hierarchy that settlers assigned to him/her); and who was obedient and could be controlled by state institutions and employers. This, however, did not mean that a 'proper' African urbanite would enjoy 'full' citizenship as race was the primary category of citizen differentiation.

Middle-class Africans continued to strive for equal citizenship with settlers. As in other vigorously racially segregated societies, education was crucial for Africans' social position and a chance for social mobility in Southern Rhodesia. It was an avenue for improving one's income and living standard as well as receiving social benefits. In white-supremacist Southern Rhodesia, educated Africans were loathed by most white settlers; however, they were admired by other

Africans. In spite of this, during the 1950s–1960s when the African middle class had a highly educated elite fully formed, socio-political tensions among Africans intensified as educated middle-class Africans were criticised for abandoning their people and not fighting the colonisers. Indeed, in the 1950s, just as before, elite Africans did not seek to lead the struggle against the settlers. Rather, they aspired to achieve equality with them in a deracialised society. In the 1950s, they joined the ‘racial partnership’ which was seen as a new form of a long-anticipated racially neutral relationship among ‘civilised’ men. In practice, it was largely a farce, and as it failed, the African middle class was finally forced into the nationalist movement with the aim of finishing the white minority rule (West, 2002, p. 66). What is crucial to note though, is that the goal of the African middle class at that stage was to end the ‘colonial conflation of race and class’ but not to create an egalitarian and just economic and socio-political system for all Africans. As the Zimbabwe African People’s Union (ZAPU) officials explained, the colonial administration ‘made the tragic mistake of treating all Africans as one, forgetting that some are educated and civilised and therefore need better treatment than that meted to farmboys’ (NAZ, F128/L7 quoted in West, 2002, pp. 66–67). This premise, of course, changed later, during the liberation war, as both ZAPU and ZANU adopted socialist programmes, at least in theory (Raftopoulos, 2006).

By the late 1950s, it became clear that the idea of creating a ‘stable’ class of African urbanites was ephemeral – thousands of men could not access agricultural land due to restrictive legislation or find a job and had to resort to precarious livelihoods in town. The drought of 1959–1960 further exacerbated the situation, and more people entered urban areas in search of employment (Alexander, 2012, pp. 348–349). Urban areas were now depicted as full of criminals and vice (West, 2002, pp. 99–118). Crackdowns on ‘undesirable’ urban Africans (illegal traders, street vendors, ‘loose’ women, vagrants, loafers and *tsotsis*¹²) became a common phenomenon (Alexander, 2012, p. 349). The approach not only criminalised broad categories

¹² Young criminals from townships.

of African urbanites but also demonised women: 'women were the villains whose bad behaviour was to blame for the upheavals in African society' (Barnes, 1999, p. 132).

Women's place in urban areas as well as their mobility in general were highly controlled. Still, many women, single and married, lived in urban areas. In the 1930s–1950s, women in urban areas engaged in various economic activities ranging from factory and domestic work to prostitution and beer-brewing (Barnes, 1999). According to the housing regulations of that time, women could only access housing through marriage, formal or informal (Barnes, 1992; 1995; 1999). This arrangement made many women shift to the informal economy domain. Although married women, particularly middle-class, were seen as 'respectable' by both the government and some African men (see West, 2002), the presence of women in urban areas was seen as a problem not just by men in rural areas, who wished to control their mobility and labour, but also by some men in the urban African and settler communities. This provoked waves of violence towards urban women who were better placed in the socio-economic hierarchy than many impoverished men, most notoriously during the 1956 bus boycott (Barnes, 1999). Until the 1950s, women used informal trade and beer-brewing in townships as a route for social mobility and to help themselves and their families achieve a 'respectable' status. A shift happened in the 1950s when respectable middle-class married women opposed the presence of single women in urban areas who made a living through informal trade and beer-brewing. Still, in the post-war period, women, both married and single, had better chances of entering formal employment in secondary industries which was permitted as a means for stabilising the male labour force and slow down the mobilisation of male migrants in nationalist movements (Scarnecchia, 1996). African women's experiences of citizenship in urban areas, regardless of their family and employment status, was nonetheless even more restricted than that of African men.

In 1960, Southern Rhodesia introduced a new Vagrancy Act which was supposed not to exclude vagrants from the urban space, but to rehabilitate them and turn them into

productive citizens. It was unprecedented as previous legislation sought to exclude vagrants and other ‘undesirables’, in the white community’s view, categories of urban dwellers from the urban space. These declared goals of the new vagrancy legislation were supposed to give legitimacy to the government’s actions. Remarkably, ‘vagrants’ were not criminalised by this Act, and it was reflected in the language: ‘subjects’ as opposed to ‘the accused’ and ‘rehabilitation centres’ as opposed to ‘prisons’ (Alexander, 2012, p. 354). However, the policy towards vagrants was punitive and repressive in reality. It was perceived by Africans as criminalising and depriving people of livelihoods within the colonial economy (Alexander, 2012). The new Vagrancy Act was presented as non-racial, although the facilities involved in the implementation of the Act and rehabilitation of ‘vagrants’ were segregated. Besides, there were no provisions specifically for black women who in the previous decades were blamed for most urban vices. Now the blame shifted to single black men not captured in major social institutions that were expected to be the foundations of urban stability and respectability – family and formal work (Ibid., pp. 350–351). The core idea of the act was to turn the undesirable urban underclass into ‘useful’, i.e. productive, urban citizens. It is also important to note that under this legislation, nationalists were not deliberately targeted for ‘rehabilitation’ – the practice that was soon to be revised. In reality, however, urban Africans targeted by this legislation, who had already been excluded from land and formal employment, were further stigmatised. Africans who drew on nationalist ideas of citizenship resented the ideas of urban citizenship based on productivity that was perpetuated by the government (Ibid.).

Overall, the policy of urban control in Salisbury was getting more stringent before the onset of the liberation struggle. The Rhodesian government and Salisbury local authorities marginalised, stigmatised, and criminalised social groups they considered ‘undesirable’ and denied them the right to the city and put strong limitations on citizenship for Africans in urban areas. Full citizenship applied only to settlers. Middle-class Africans struggled to achieve the same citizenship status and practice citizenship in the same way as settlers on the grounds of

‘respectability’ and ‘civilisation’. However, the administration and settler community blocked their attempts as they did not want to treat any Africans, even educated and ‘respectable’ ones, as equals. Labourers were barely recognised as citizens and only when their presence in town and in townships could be justified by the labour they provided for the colonial economy. Besides race, gender played a crucial role as the norms of ‘respectability’ were gendered and it was even harder for women to justify their presence in town and in townships than for men. The ideas and practices of lived citizenship were, therefore, shaped by categories, like race, class, and gender, and as discussed in Chapter 1, citizenship was ‘variegated’ (Inda, 2005), i.e. various groups of citizens were not equal, and their practices of citizenship significantly differed. There was, however, a significant difference between the notions of citizenship imposed on people by the government, and their practices of lived citizenship. Gradually, the segregation policy resulted in the concentration of urban Africans in several areas and facilitated the development of the urban African community which eventually gave rise to protest politics and the nationalist movement (Scarnecchia, 2008).

§4. URBAN DEVELOPMENT AND INFORMALITY DURING THE UNILATERAL DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE PERIOD AND THE LIBERATION STRUGGLE (1965–1980)

During the Unilateral Declaration of Independence (UDI) period and liberation war, the Rhodesian control over mobility and migration from rural to urban areas began failing as people started fleeing rural areas. Men and women went to towns to escape the dangers of the Rhodesian security services and guerrillas and to look for jobs as rural areas became major sites of the liberation struggle. This process shifted the gender and racial composition of the urban areas with the increasing presence of women and Africans compared to the earlier colonial period (Rakodi and Withers, 1993). The rapid growth of the urban population of Salisbury, rising unemployment due to the increased labour, and limited housing availability led to the

emergence of refugee and squatter camps on the outskirts of Salisbury, largely comprised of war-displaced Africans (Ibid.).

Changes occurred regarding the treatment of the urban underclass, namely, 'loafers' and 'vagrants'. With the Rhodesian Front in power, the progressive rhetoric of rehabilitation of 'undesirable' Africans ceased to exist as they viewed the African unrest as an expression of African savagery (Alexander, 2012). In 1973, a new Vagrancy Act was adopted which blatantly criminalised the urban destitute and enabled their removal to rural areas (Alexander, 2012). Unlike the previous government which attempted to 'rehabilitate' unemployed and homeless urbanites through the 1960 Vagrancy Act, the Rhodesian Front government returned to earlier forms of punishment and exclusion of 'undesirable' elements from urban areas, and this time nationalists were targeted for 'rehabilitation' programmes as well, albeit unsuccessfully. The policy towards the urban destitute and unemployed returned to earlier practices of excluding those whom the government saw as a threat to power and order from urban areas (Ibid.).

In the 1970s, the government took measures to expand the housing market in Salisbury to deal with the influx of people from rural areas. For instance, housing for low-income families was built, new partnerships with private industries and financial institutions were established, the admission of lodgers in townships was allowed, and new housing designs were created specifically to accommodate lodgers (Chipembere cited in Dorman, 2015). Prior to 1975, the approach of the government towards squatter settlements around Salisbury was highly intolerant: the camps were demolished, and it was extremely rare that squatters were offered alternative housing arrangements (Patel, 1988). In the second half of the decade when the war intensified, the policy towards urban and peri-urban squatters (predominantly wartime internally displaced rural Africans) became more tolerant liberal, mostly because the government did not have enough resources to contain them. For instance, in 1977, the government and local authorities provided them with land on which they could build houses after relocation. Also, in 1979, 'transit camps' were allowed in town with temporary shelters for

refugees and squatters since high-density townships were already overcrowded and squatter camps were emerging in large numbers (Patel, 1988; Rakodi and Withers, 1993, p. 79).

During the liberation war, the city was no longer as well-controlled as it used to be due to massive migration from rural areas (Dorman, 2015, p. 87). The capacities of public transport in Salisbury were heavily exceeded, and 'pirate' taxis, usually poorly maintained and overcrowded, filled in the niche in the transportation market (Hardwick cited in Dorman, 2015). Urban agriculture showed exponential growth: in 1955–1980, there was an immense increase in unauthorised cultivated areas, and the illegal cultivation area in Greater Harare expanded from 267 ha to 4,762 ha (Mazambani, 1992).

There might be two reasons behind the softening of the government's and local authorities' approach to urban areas and the urban informal sector during the liberation war. Sara Rich Dorman (2015, p. 88) suggests that the UDI government was torn between fighting the war, dealing with international sanctions, and managing the decreasing workforce and considered urban areas not as threatening as rural areas where nationalists concentrated, and where residents were perceived as backing guerrilla fighters. In addition, Carole Rakodi (1993) implies that there was a split among the Rhodesian political elite, i.e. between Salisbury councillors, many of whom were independent and relatively liberal, and the ruling Rhodesian Front, the policy of which inclined more to the right wing. Dorman (2015) argues that this political elite division was at the foundation of the urban crisis which the new government faced after Independence.

Regardless of the reasons for the policy change, the softening of urban policies during the liberation struggle had an impact on citizenship. Some aspects of citizenship, such as the right to accommodation, were extended to new urban migrants and refugees who were considered squatters, but at that time could become lodgers and build their housing at allocated land plots. The urban space was now used for more informal economic activities, such as transportation and urban agriculture, which was not allowed before. Although it was not the

general policy, the urban space sporadically became more informalised, less regulated, and more open to the black population. This, of course, was an unwilling concession that the Rhodesian government eventually had to make as it could no longer keep the African urban population under strict control for economic exploitation and political power and meticulously preserve urban areas as outposts of European modernity: as the war intensified from 1975, the flow of refugees from rural areas increased exponentially, and the government did not have the resources and mechanisms to regulate their access to the city.

It can be inferred that all these developments shifted ideas of citizenship among black urbanites as practices and experiences of citizenship changed considerably alongside the transformations of the urban space by war. They managed to expand their presence, economic activity, and visibility in the capital. They made claims to the urban space, and those claims went beyond what the Rhodesian government would consider ‘reasonable’ or ‘acceptable’ a few years before. By 1979–1980, the black urban residents, albeit not deliberately, were able to expand their forms of urban citizenship (through gaining access to new housing and engaging in the informal economy). They used the urban space to earn a living (e.g. via informal trade and urban agriculture) and filled the voids in the economy and infrastructure encroaching on the local authorities’ functions (e.g. via ‘pirate’ taxis). Those were the first steps towards reclaiming the right to the urban space and to a livelihood that did not fit the imagined ‘modern’ economy and ‘modern’ city. As seen in Chapter 1, while governments may use a top-down approach to set rigid citizenship boundaries and limit the rights to the city (Solinger, 1999; Dorman, 2015), people may use informal (and sometimes even illegal) means to counter such impositions and engage in insurgent citizenship practices to enhance their experiences of lived citizenship and gain more rights, including the right to the city and to a livelihood.

§5. POST-INDEPENDENCE HARARE AND THE RESTORATION OF COLONIAL URBAN
POLITICS

After Independence, the urban space became democratised under the black majority ZANU–PF government, the political representation of black Zimbabweans considerably improved and institutionalised racial segregation in urban planning and legislation was removed. Still, ZANU–PF’s approach to urban areas was comparable to that of the colonial period in important ways. Urban politics in the 1980s and 1990s was expressed by both changes and continuities with the colonial practices of limiting the right to the city. Until the mid-1990s, the government highly restricted the urban franchise which was based on rate-paying (Dorman, 2015). By-laws and planning regulations remained mostly the same, and only ‘legitimate’ businesses, i.e. those that were officially registered, recognised by the city authorities and paid taxes, were allowed in the city (Ibid.). At the same time, as the economic situation was worsening in the 1990s, people started increasingly using the urban space for informal income generation, expanding their right to the city through lived citizenship practices and using the urban space to generate livelihoods.

The early post-Independence period became one of the reference points for the vision of the future in Zimbabwe. Indeed, ZANU–PF in the 1980s was widely regarded as an epitome of progressive and modern politics (Phimister, 2012). ZANU–PF deracialised the state, redistributed land, and made education and healthcare available for the majority of the black population. The end of the white minority rule was a massive leap forward that created the basis for democracy (Hoffman, 2012). However, there were substantial criticisms even at that time with some scholars predicting the ‘betrayal’ of the revolutionary potential of the liberation and parting with the socialist ideals (Saul, 1980; Astrow, 1983; Mandaza, 1986).

In the first decade of Independence, ZANU–PF pursued the policy of modernising development with a hint of socialism (Alexander, 2010). Rhodesian practices strongly shaped this policy. With Independence, Zimbabwe inherited a powerful modern bureaucratic state

from Southern Rhodesia which had the necessary mechanisms to pursue and deliver modernising development policies. The number of Zimbabweans who were able to access education and healthcare in the 1980s was unprecedented. Besides that, three million hectares of formerly white-owned land was redistributed to 70,000 black owners in what was one of the most massive land redistributions in Africa. In addition to that, Zimbabwe had a well-developed middle class and literate and educated population and inherited a diversified and industrialised economy and a sound infrastructure (Ibid.). Modernising development which the ZANU–PF government was able to deliver was a central part of their ideology. The promises of development and modernisation were the primary sources of the ZANU–PF government’s legitimacy in the 1980s (Karekwaivanane, 2012). Besides bringing about material improvements, the government reasserted its commitments to modernity, demonstrated its capacity to deliver services and emphasised its intent of correcting racial imbalances and injustices of the colonial era.

The seemingly straightforward development strategy in practice was complicated by several factors: there were challenges in the post-war reconstruction process, adjustment of the former colonial economy, and democratisation of the inherited colonial state. Other factors, such as race, ethnicity, class and gender, further complicated the post-war nation-building project (Chigudu, 2020, p. 50). Considering these challenges, development in Zimbabwe became a contradictory notion. On the one hand, ZANU–PF insisted on the people-driven notion of development ‘encapsulating all that had been denied by the Rhodesian regime’ (Dorman, 2016, p. 45; McGregor and Ranger, 2000) as opposed to top-down colonial practices. This policy received overwhelming support from international aid agencies and donors, and improvements in education and healthcare were impressive (Auret, 1990; World Bank, 1992; Muzondidya, 2009; Mlambo, 2014). Still, some considered these accomplishments ‘limited [and] unsustainable’ (Muzondidya, 2009, p. 169) as Zimbabwe was still experiencing broad and profound social and economic problems. The rapid post-Independence economic growth was

short-lived, and the economy was negatively affected by high oil prices, interest rates as well as droughts and worsening trade terms which jeopardised welfare and redistributive initiatives.

On the other hand, the ZANU–PF government pursued policies based on its ideas of modernisation and order which were coercive, militaristic, and rigid (Chigudu, 2020, pp. 51–52) with regard to urban policies. This vision was further supplemented by continuing Cold War tensions, a threat from South Africa, strong colonial-era security institutions and the inherited repressive colonial legislation which also provided the basis for militarisation and coerciveness of ZANU–PF policies (Alexander, McGregor and Ranger, 2000; Mlambo, 2014; Dorman, 2016). There was an inherent logic to it as ZANU–PF’s idea of ‘proper’ citizens with regards to both urban and rural areas was that of Shona speakers, disciplined and productively using land, and the government enforced this vision by restrictive and frequently violent means (Dorman, 2016). The ethnic dimension of citizenship emerged from colonial times when the two rival nationalist movements – ZANU and ZAPU – along with their military wings were formed along ethnic and regional lines (Shona and Ndebele speaking respectively), although there were representatives of other ethnic groups within each formation (Mlambo, 2007, p. 113).

After Independence, ZAPU lost the first national elections to ZANU, and a part of ZAPU-affiliated guerrillas refused to fully demobilise and created caches of arms for the fear of being attacked by the Rhodesian armed forces which were still intact (Alexander, 1998, p. 152). The conflict soon erupted with the involvement of government forces, guerrilla fighters from both ZANU and ZAPU military wings and civilians. The ethnic, regional and political tensions led to the Matabeleland¹³ crisis of the 1980s when the ZANU government brutally suppressed the dissent of political rebels from the rival ZAPU killing over 20,000 civilians in 1982–1987 in Matabeleland and Midlands¹⁴ (Muzondidya, 2009, p. 179). The government deployed the army

¹³ A region in southwestern Zimbabwe populated mostly by the Zimbabwean ethnic minority group Ndebele.

¹⁴ A province in central Zimbabwe with a significant Ndebele-speaking population.

and militia unit called the Fifth Brigade in *Gukurahundi*¹⁵ operation which was a combination of murder and torture of ZAPU supporters and ethnic minority Ndebele civilians, as well as sexual violence towards women and girls, ZANU political indoctrination, and forcing of Ndebele speakers to speak Shona (Muzondidya, 2009, p. 179). The conflict ended in 1987 with a formal integration of ZAPU into ZANU–PF, although it had long-standing consequences and legacy for the Zimbabwean state in the 2000s, such as ‘excesses of a strong state, itself in many ways a direct Rhodesian inheritance, and a particular interpretation of nationalism’ (Alexander, McGregor, and Ranger, 2000, p. 6).

Although ZAPU was the main target for state violence and loyalty to ZAPU meant a total denial of citizenship rights for many, the government started pursuing controlling, coercive, and violent policies towards the civil society, trade unions, and political opposition in general. In 1987, after ZAPU was crushed and subsumed into ZANU–PF, constitutional amendments facilitated the centralisation of power and establishment of one-party rule (Mandaza and Sachikonye, 1991).

Urban politics in the 1980s showed both changes and continuities with the colonial policies and practices of urban governance and urban citizenship. Housing was an important aspect of urban politics after Independence. There was a slow expansion of high-density suburbs in Harare and the development of new ones. Although the new government had impressive plans for building 115,000 housing units in the country in the early 1980s to solve the accommodation crisis, only 13,500 were constructed by 1985. The production of housing declined in the later 1980s (Rakodi cited in Zinyama, 1993, p. 25). Housing production became a self-help process in which individuals were provided with sites and were expected to build houses in accordance with approved plans. However, due to the high cost of materials, the poor, for whom this scheme was intended, could not benefit from it (Auret, 1990). Still, although many housing schemes did not work properly due to financial problems, the access to the city

¹⁵ In Shona, ‘the rain that sweeps away the chaff’ (Muzondidya, 2009, p. 179).

and the right to reside in the city was no longer limited by the economic and political elites: formally, it was no longer extended exclusively based on race or to ‘useful’ or ‘respectable’ citizens, i.e. those who were employed, kept the urban economy going, and fit the colonial notion of what an urbanite should look and live like. Despite that, the urban franchise was still very limited immediately after Independence as rate-paying, i.e. home ownership, became the basis of the urban franchise from Independence until the mid-1990s and not all urban residents but only rate-payers (home-owners) were permitted to participate in local elections (Dorman, 2015).

Despite the slow expansion of housing construction in Harare, the approach to squatter settlements reverted to pre-war policies, and many ‘squatter’ camps, i.e. unplanned settlements, were destroyed. In 1984, for instance, 42 settlements were demolished while only eight were kept (Potts and Mutambirwa, 1991). Alternative housing arrangements were rarely provided or were unaffordable to most ‘squatters’. The government expected squatters to return to rural areas at that time (Patel, 1988) – a discourse that was later reproduced during clear-up campaigns after 2000, and which echoed colonial discourse. Pre-war attitudes towards squatters and informal housing arrangements returned again and those who could not afford ‘proper’ housing, i.e. mostly those who were not employed, became ‘undesirable’ in the urban space and the government tried to push them away to rural areas.

In 1983, the government also authorised Operation *Clean-Up* which targeted urban women who were labelled prostitutes and had to be removed from the streets, including senior women and women with children, all of whom were instructed to return to rural areas. Three years later, during Operation *Chinyavada*, women were evicted to rural Mashonaland (Dorman, 2015, p. 89). While race was no longer a criterion for exclusion from the city after Independence, gender and colonial gendered and misogynist notions of ‘respectability’ were, and women who occupied the city space, e.g. as street vendors, were still condemned as proverbial ‘loose’ women. Even the mere presence of unaccompanied women was construed as

inappropriate and not ‘respectable’: as Sara Dorman (Ibid.) notes, during Operation Clean-Up, women were arrested ‘while they waited for busses or walked home from work; some were taken out of theatres and their own homes’. What is crucial is that women were told to return to their rural homes. In a remarkable similarity with the colonial practices, the ZANU–PF government attempted to limit the right to the city and keep the rural population away from Harare.

Urban agriculture was banned once again too. From 1985, Harare City Council ordered the slashing of maize and vegetables that people grew on unused land in Harare owned by the Council. This concerned not only newly cultivated areas but also those that were used before 1980 (Mbiba, 1994). Home industries also faced a backlash in the 1980s in line with colonial views that residential areas should not be used for small-scale industrial production, such as carpentry and welding, through various legal mechanisms that were supposed ‘to control the conversion of homes into workplaces’ (Kamete, 1999). Thus, the government tried to establish how the urban space should have been used and by whom and applied these ideas not only to the CBD but also to townships. A colonially influenced vision of modernity was a key notion here: urban agriculture was clearly seen as not belonging to the ‘modern’ city just as the use of residential areas for manufacturing was not.

The new government took steps to make Harare CBD ‘modern’ by following the colonial tradition of only tolerating ‘proper’ businesses in the city, i.e. either formal businesses or licenced informal activities (Dorman, 2015, p. 89). Informal markets and hawking were prohibited, and people could only sell vegetables at authorised markets that were opened in the late 1970s (Dorman, 2015, p. 89). Authorities established control over informal transportation, and ‘pirate’ taxis were licenced in 1982 (Muchadenyika, 2018). They were tolerated and incorporated into the public transportation system as a temporary solution to the transport crisis and were renamed ‘emergency’ taxis (Dorman, 2015, p. 89).

In the 1990s, the Zimbabwean economy made a dramatic turn to neoliberalism which led to massive shifts in the economy, social services sphere and urban politics. The change in the economic policy was a result of a combination of factors, including the slowing down of the economic growth, increasing budget deficit due to redistributive policies of the 1980s, reducing investment, inflation, growing unemployment (Kanyenze, 2004, p. 98), recurrent droughts (Mlambo, 1997, p. 51), aid conditionality imposed by the international financial institutions in the 1980s – the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (Ibid., xi). In addition, the Matabeleland crisis led not only to the loss of thousands of lives but also to economic consequences as it halted economic development in Matabeleland, involved the destruction of infrastructure (e.g. schools and government offices), diverted the resources towards military expenditure, and worsened the public image of the country which foreign investors now saw as too unstable (Mlambo, 1997, pp. 45–46).

As a result of these complex economic factors, in 1991–1995 the Zimbabwean government implemented the Economic Structural Adjustment Programme (ESAP) which was promoted by the international financial institutions. The reforms included, for example, removal of price control and exchange rate control, privatisation and trade liberalisation (Ndelela cited in Mlambo, 2017, p. 104) as well as a dramatic reduction of social service provision and introduction of cost-recovery policies in the social sphere, including in education and healthcare (Mlambo, 2013). While it was expected to boost the economy through various economic liberalisation measures, the result was the opposite and led to severely negative consequences in the economic and social spheres (Mlambo, 2013; 2017). In the Zimbabwean case, these neoliberal reforms were exacerbated by a severe drought in 1992 (Mlambo, 2013, p. 363). As Alois Mlambo (2013, p. 363) notes, ‘[t]he combination [of the ESAP and terrible drought] proved disastrous for the poor majority’.

Throughout the 1990s, the urban crisis caused by post-Independence urbanisation, economic decline, and accommodation shortage was worsening further. There was a significant

shortage of housing, and home-owners increasingly started to rent out rooms and shacks at their properties, which was accepted by the local authorities (Rakodi, 1993; Dorman, 2015, pp. 89–90). Despite the worsening poverty in urban areas, the government continued its harsh policies towards squatters in the early 1990s. The government took measures to relocate the urban destitute to former refugee camps and training centres (Bourdillon cited in Dorman, 2015, p. 90). Most notoriously, before the visit of Queen Elizabeth II to Harare in 1991, squatters from 21 areas in and around Harare were moved to a peri-urban farm (Rakodi, 1993, pp. 74–76).

However, regulations of informal economic activities somewhat loosened as a response to the growing poverty in urban areas later in the 1990s (Maunder and Mbara, 1995; Brickhill, 1998; Dorman, 2015, p. 90). As Sara Rich Dorman (2015, p. 90) indicates, it can be seen as a form of ‘redistribution’ or compromise on the government’s part. While the government was not interested or could not pursue extensive welfare policies at that time, it, to an extent, allowed informal economic activities as a coping strategy to prevent further decline in the living standard. In the early 1990s, the local authorities lifted the ban on urban agriculture, and maize slashing stopped later in the decade (Brickhill, 1998). In the public transport sphere, the beginning economic crisis jeopardised the expansion of the bus system as well as the maintenance of the existing bus fleet, and in the mid-1990s, commuter omnibuses (or combis) were introduced to fill in the gap; thus, the urban public transport sector became deregulated (Maunder and Mbara, 1995). Combis quickly replaced unlicensed emergency taxis (formerly, ‘pirate’ taxis) which had proliferated in the preceding years and greatly improved travel in and out of Harare (Ibid.), although they did not fully resolve the public transport crisis.

In the early 1990s, in the context of ESAP, informal trade regulations were eased, leading to an increased number of vendors and hawkers (Horn cited in Dorman, 2015, p. 90). At the same time, the spread of home industries in Harare was tolerated by the local authorities which did not undertake any significant steps to prohibit or limit this form of informal economic activity (Tevera and Chimhowu, 1998; Kamete, 1999). The government also eased restrictions

on home industries for political reasons: in line with indigenisation ideas of economic empowerment of black Zimbabweans, this move was supposed to uplift economically disadvantaged people and stimulate the growth of small businesses (Kamete, 1999, p. 194). As Daniel Tevera and Admos Chimhowu (1998, p. 20) note,

the general mood has shifted from intolerance during the 'socialist era' of the 1980s to tolerance during the 1990s. The need to maintain a rapidly eroding political power base and to soften the impact of political hardships... has compelled both central government and the Harare city council to grudgingly allow the proliferation of backyard shacks in the low-income residential areas.

As Jeremy Jones (2010) suggests, the increased tolerance of home industries and self-help (informal) economic activities was in the spirit of neoliberalism, which underpinned politics in many developing countries in the 1990s. At the same time, there was a long-existing and deeply rooted ethic of 'working with one's hands' (*mabasa emaoko*) in Zimbabwe which was adjusted to fit the economic and political situation (Ibid., p. 288). Also, the indigenisation programme, to a large extent, was based on the ideas of self-sufficiency and self-help (Raftopoulos and Compagnon, 2003). As Jones (2010, p. 288) notes,

people were producing on every corner: furniture, bricks, soap, window and door frames, etc. Moreover, every street was populated with backyard 'tuck shops' selling retail items and locally produced foodstuffs. Flea markets sold clothes, music, and new and used tools and appliances, and backyard shacks ('boys' *khayas*) offered home-owners substantial rental incomes. It was, in short, a vibrant economy, if not an industrial one.

Even though the government was eager to keep the city 'modern', meaning regulated, well-planned, organised, and clean, in continuation with colonial practices and notions of modernity, the worsening economic situation and the inability to provide education and healthcare made the government loosen the restrictions and tolerate if not legalise informal and sometimes illegal economic activities which were increasingly becoming people's livelihoods or family income supplements.

The practices of lived citizenship, therefore, changed as people now could determine how to use the urban space for income generation, which expanded their right to the city. The relationship with the authorities also shifted as the government and local authorities did not

enforce restrictive by-laws as vigorously as before. What is important to remember, however, is that all these processes of the 1990s were a result of the worsening economic situation: people's lived citizenship might have changed in the direction of people having greater access to and use of urban space, both in the city centre and residential areas, but at the same time, people were losing as citizens in terms of substantive citizenship, e.g. income, formal employment, and access to and affordability of education and healthcare.

At the same time, in the 1990s, urban areas became the sites of new forms of opposition politics and political mobilisation. In 1995, the local elections were also fully democratised for the first time. Before that, the right to vote in local elections was extended to rate-payers (home-owners) only, usually formally employed men, while many women, lodgers, and domestic workers were not allowed to vote. Now all residents could vote in both local and national elections (Dorman, 2015), and actually existing citizenship defined by political rights was extended to all urban residents. The elections in the 1990s were heavily contested. In the 1990 election, in urban areas ZANU–PF was challenged by the Zimbabwe Unity Movement (ZUM) formed by Edgar Tekere, a former ZANU–PF Member of Parliament, in response to the ZANU–PF proposal to establish a one-party state (Ncube, 1989, pp. 320–324). The elections were violent with one of the ZUM contestants assassinated and ZUM supporters beaten (Dorman, 2016, p. 94). President Robert Mugabe accused ZUM of being supported by foreign organisations, Zimbabwe's enemies, and the former Rhodesian Front (*Herald* cited in Dorman, 2016, p. 95). In 1990, ZUM received 18% of votes with 30% of urban votes but only got two parliamentary seats (Sylvester, 1990, p. 376). However, factionalism affected ZUM which soon disappeared from the political arena (Dorman, 2016, p. 95). Independent candidates started successfully contesting ZANU–PF's virtually one-party rule in the 1995 parliamentary and municipal elections. These political developments indicated that the urban crisis was expressed in both political transformations and the rise of the informal sector (Dorman, 2005).

In general, the new government restored and continued to enforce many colonial urban regulations right after Independence that were meant to maintain order and keep Harare a modern city as ‘the fascination with planned, orderly cities remained’ (Potts, 2011, p. 26). The right to use the urban space and be in the CBD was strictly controlled: only ‘legitimate’ businesses and licensed informal activities were allowed in the CBD. In townships, informal housing arrangements were discouraged and so were urban agriculture and backyard industries. In addition, as mentioned above, crackdowns on women, including schoolgirls and older women were periodic in the 1980s. Overall, it can be seen that a ‘good’ citizen, in the eyes of the post-Independence government and local authorities was a formally employed one, preferably a Shona-speaking man, who lived in a formal housing arrangement and complied with by-laws. Class and gender were important factors in the top-down definition of citizenship. However, due to the implementation of ESAP and the beginning economic crisis and growing urban poverty in the 1990s, some of the restrictions were eased. There was a transformation in the state’s understanding of the citizenship of urban residents. It shifted from the colonial labour-based and early post-colonial rate-paying understanding to residence-based. In the 1990s, urban residents used their newly expanded citizenship rights to express their political discontent. This process extended actually existing citizenship to women, many of whom engaged in informal economic activities to supplement their families’ income, and to poorer urban residents who were not rate-payers.

§6. CONCLUSION

The Chapter has considered the politics of urban planning, informality, and control in Zimbabwe from the early colonial period. It sought to demonstrate that despite certain changes in urban politics after Independence, the general foundations of politics towards urban informality were shaped in colonial times by notions of modernity.

Before the liberation struggle, the Rhodesian government and Salisbury's local authorities under pressure from white settlers and businesses, introduced segregationist policies in the areas of residence and business, effectively clearing the town of all Africans they considered 'undesirable' and not 'respectable', including vagrants, loafers, hawkers, and vendors, denying them the right to the city. The purpose of this move was to control Africans in urban areas and limit their mobility. This led to the consolidation of discontent in specific urban areas, especially the location, which became the primary site of urban protest.

During the liberation struggle, as migration from rural areas intensified and urban poverty increased, the government and city council loosened urban regulations, including those on informal economic activities. Urban citizenship in the sense of access was extended to former squatters and people who earned their livelihood in the informal sector. Despite those transformations, overall, the politics of control of Africans in urban areas was still strong as the government continued to identify and criminalise all those whom it did not see as modern and respectable.

After Independence, there were dramatic changes, but many colonial urban regulations were retained or revived. The new government limited the right to the city, only allowing 'legitimate' businesses. The government and local authorities took measures to ensure that Harare maintained its status of a modern city. Housing, urban agriculture, vending, and home industries were strongly regulated and restricted. In addition, the franchise was restricted to ratepayers. With the implementation of ESAP and the worsening economic situation in the 1990s, the government was forced to reconsider some of these regulations, and they were partially eased in an attempt to decrease urban poverty. The understanding of citizenship at that time also shifted from the colonial notion based on a labour contract to rate-paying and then, in 1995, to residence, which enabled a new means for the expression of urban discontent through the vote.

It is essential to stress that the colonial ideas and ideals of modernity and urban development enforced by the settler community and colonial administration led to two trajectories in the development of ideas and practices of citizenship among black urbanites. On the one hand, there were representatives of the African middle class who internalised notions of respectability and modernity and sought to achieve equal citizenship with the white community. On the other hand, there were black labourers, women, unemployed people, and squatters, many of whom engaged in practices of citizenship manifested through the ‘un-modern’ use of the urban space in both the CBD and townships and ‘un-modern’ economic practices, such as informal trade, manufacture, and beer-brewing, and who eroded the enforced practices of modernity and ‘proper’ citizenship. The experiences of lived citizenship of these two groups were very different and it is debatable whether this was done intentionally as in many cases such ‘bad’ citizenship practices (in the eyes of the colonial administration and even post-Independence government) aimed at providing people with a source of livelihood, increasing family income, and creating upward social mobility avenues, which were extremely thin in colonial and post-colonial Zimbabwe. These may be seen as insurgent citizenship (see §2 in Chapter 1), a form of lived citizenship when people engaged in informal ways of reclaiming their right to the city and livelihood. However, this insurgent citizenship may be seen as an advance in people’s experiences of lived citizenship, such development was frequently achieved at the cost of substantive citizenship as urban controls only loosened when the colonial and post-Independence governments were unable or unwilling to provide urban residents with necessary resources and public services, e.g. housing, employment opportunities, public transportation, or welfare support.

Overall, the foundations of the post-1998 oppressive and frequently brutal politics towards the urban informal sector can be traced to the colonial period. They were grounded in notions of urban modernity and their expression in state interventions. The politics of the informal sector and urban control in Salisbury has long affected people’s understanding and

experiences of citizenship, forming at once a powerful adherence to ideas of urban modernity and their linkages to aspects of lived citizenship like rights to residence, work, or the franchise, as well as a shifting critique of it as these ideas bore down differently across gender, class and space. The ways in which the unprecedented economic informalisation after 1998 changed the lives of Harare residents and their urban politics will be explored in the next Chapter.

CHAPTER 3.

‘I WANT IT TO BE LIKE IN THE 1980s’: ECONOMIC INFORMALISATION AND THE MODERNIST MINDSET IN ZIMBABWE AFTER 1998

§1. INTRODUCTION

This Chapter looks at the disconnect that emerged between the modernist mindset of Zimbabweans and the reality which changed dramatically under the impact of the profound economic, social and political crisis from the late 1990s. It argues that the dramatic rise of economic informalisation moved the everyday life of Zimbabweans into a ‘survival mode’ and challenged modernist assumptions about urban life that people inherited from colonial times as and that were supported since by state institutions, thus creating a disconnection between people’s mindset and reality that, in the end, affected their ideas about and practices of citizenship.

The Chapter looks at four interconnected aspects of the modernist mindset affected by economic informalisation and the broader crisis. First, it considers the Zimbabwe African National Union–Patriotic Front’s (ZANU–PF) early modernising development project with a focus on urban developments, the impact of the economic crisis on ZANU–PF’s modernisation programme and urban areas, and the implications of this profound crisis for the development of a vision of the future of the country that was grounded in the past. Then, it discusses the collapse of the image of Harare as a modern city in the state and private media during the ‘crisis’, specifically focusing on informal economic activities and their manifestations in Harare’s Central Business District (CBD), which is considered to be the ‘business card’ of the entire country, as it were. Further, the Chapter looks at a social dimension of the modernist thinking as it was divorced from reality – the perception of ‘work’ by people in the informal sector and the implications of this perception for lived citizenship the experiences of citizenship. Finally, it looks at the disconnect between education, which has been seen as a pathway to social mobility, and the absence of employment opportunities which has cut off this pathway for thousands of

young people. This also reflected the growing disconnect between the modernist mindset and survivalist reality and further eroded the understanding of citizenship grounded in the notion of modernity.

Diverse qualitative sources are used in this Chapter. Articles and editorials from Zimbabwean state and private newspapers tell a story of the changing image of Harare from a modern city to a site of disorder. They are an important source that shows the rigidity of modernist convictions and how they have been translated to the public through mass media sources despite continuous economic and urban crises and informalisation. Posts of Zimbabweans on social media (in this case, *Twitter*) allow us to see how people engage in the reproduction of modernist ideas of a proper city which had been lost to economic informalisation and the urban crisis. Interviews with informal sector actors have given me an insight into people's interpretations of their reality through the modernist mindset that they grew up with and which they continue to reproduce in narratives about 'proper' work and the future of Zimbabwe. Finally, the lyrics of Zimdancehall songs is an original source. It is a music genre that is particularly popular among the youth and that is produced and consumed by the youth. It addressed the issues of modernity, work, and economic informality and can inform the understanding of the disjoint between the modernist mindset and the harsh economic reality as well as people's perception of themselves in this situation.

§2. THE CRISIS OF MODERNISING DEVELOPMENT, ECONOMIC INFORMALISATION AND IMAGINATION OF THE PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE IN ZIMBABWE

Zimbabwe's non-agricultural economy was highly industrially developed before the Economic Structural Adjustment Programme (ESAP), with a small informal sector (Mazingi and Kamidza, 2011, p. 327). As mentioned before, the economic crisis of the 1990s and the ESAP among other reasons led to the rise of the urban informal sector as a source of livelihood and, consequently, means of survival. As a result, a 'great divide' emerged between the

modernist mindset, which stemmed from the colonial and early postcolonial vision of modernising development (Alexander and Jeater, 1994; Alexander, 2010; Potts, 2010, pp. 74–75), and the survivalist reality which has been shaping political thinking and vision of politicians and ordinary people alike (see §2 in Chapter 1). The disconnect between the mindset and reality has affected people’s vision of the past, present and future. I suggest that individuals in the informal sector have gradually come to see the future of Zimbabwe in its past which is regarded as ‘proper’ and ‘modern’ in terms of economic development, social welfare, and the role of the state in people’s lives. This imagination of the future is an important dimension of people’s experiences of citizenship as it expresses their frustration with the state of affairs after ESAP and articulates their belief that it is necessary for the government to revisit the past to move the country’s economic and social development forward.

To explore the political imagination of informal sector actors in Harare and their ideas of the past, present, and future of Zimbabwe, it is essential to outline the political and economic developments in Zimbabwe after 2000 as it was in this highly politicised and contested environment that such opinions were shaped. In the late 1990s, ZANU–PF faced strong political opposition in the form of the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) which built on the backbone of trade unions, student activism and the constitutional movement, and rapidly gained support in the urban areas (Raftopoulos, 2009). In 1999, the government-proposed constitution was rejected at the referendum, which was the result of the work of a broad coalition around the MDC and the National Constitutional Assembly (NCA), a founding member and a strong MDC ally. This referendum was the first major defeat of the ruling party and it raised concerns about the possibility of defeat in the coming parliamentary elections in 2000 and presidential elections in 2002 (Ibid.).

In the face of this competition, ZANU–PF endorsed land occupations of white-owned commercial farms and agro-estates which came to be known as the fast-track land reform and resettlement programme. The land was a major source of grievance in the predominantly rural

country where the agrarian structure and land ownership was racially skewed from the colonial period and white commercial farmers controlled a major part of the prime land. The political threat posed by the opposition played an important role in the framing of land reform as the Third *Chimurenga*¹⁶ and an extension of the anti-imperialist and pan-African struggle (the First *Chimurenga* is the Shona and Ndebele insurrections against the British South Africa Company in the 1890s, the Second *Chimurenga* – the liberation war from the Rhodesian white minority government in the 1960–1970s). Authoritarian nationalism was an integral part of the Third *Chimurenga* narrative. It constructed whites, the civil society, and the MDC as ‘outsiders’, ‘sell-outs’, and ‘enemies of the nation’ who were supported by the west (Raftopoulos, 2005). The government also introduced legislative measures to limit the activity of the opposition and civil society and turned to violent means to ensure ZANU–PF’s electoral victory. During the 2000 and 2002 elections, MDC supporters faced extensive violence from ZANU–PF youth militia, including murder, torture, rape, abductions, and threats (Raftopoulos, 2009, p. 215). Despite that, the results of the elections showed that the MDC enjoyed massive support from voters: in 2000, MDC received 47% of votes as opposed to 49% for ZANU–PF; in 2002 MDC leader Morgan Tsvangirai received 42% while Robert Mugabe had 56%. After the elections, the violence towards the opposition continued, and many opposition supporters and presumed supporters were punished by the ruling party and the government for supporting the MDC. The 2005 Operation *Murambatsvina* in which the government sanctioned the destruction of ‘illegal’ structures (e.g. housing, workshops and market stalls) depriving people of accommodation and livelihoods was in part seen as punishment for the urban areas for their strong support of the opposition (Mlambo, 2008; Potts, 2006; Kamete, 2007).

At the same time, the Zimbabwean economy rapidly spiralled downwards after 2000. The causes for the decline included the legacies of the colonial economy, such as resource

¹⁶ ‘Chimurenga’ in Shona means ‘revolt’.

inequalities, a failure to build a broad productive base due to narrow capital accumulation, an ineffective labour system which was based on cheap and migrant labour, and not unproblematic social and economic policies of the ‘welfarist’ 1980s and neoliberal 1990s (Raftopoulos, 2009, p. 219; Bond, 2007). By 2006, the gross domestic product per capita was 48% lower than in 1980 (Robinson, 2007, p.4). By the end of 2008, hyperinflation reached 230,000,000% (Ibid., p.15).

It was in the context of this severe economic and financial crisis that the 2007 elections took place. They were accompanied by extreme violence towards the opposition and civil society and the 2007 political crisis when prominent Zimbabwean opposition politicians and civic activists, including Morgan Tsvangirai, Tendai Biti, Arthur Mutambara and Lovemore Madhuku, were arrested and beaten. With the mediation of the Southern African Development Community (SADC), the elections were held in 2008. ZANU–PF lost the parliamentary majority to the MDC in March 2008. In response, the presidential elections in June were accompanied by extreme violence from ZANU–PF towards the opposition which caused Morgan Tsvangirai to withdraw from the elections. In the aftermath of the elections, with SADC mediation, power-sharing negotiations took place between ZANU–PF and MDC, and the Government of National Unity (GNU) was formed in 2009 (Raftopoulos, 2009). In 2009, to tackle hyperinflation, the dollarisation of the economy took place, and the GNU period in general was characterised by relative economic stabilisation and improvement (Mlambo, 2017, pp. 106–107).

Due to splits within the MDC, the inability of the two formations (that of Morgan Tsvangirai and Welshman Ncube) to work together in the GNU and during the elections, and an already disadvantaged position as ZANU–PF controlled coercive state institutions, ZANU–PF won the 2013 elections amidst massive accusations of rigging the elections (Raftopoulos, 2013; Mlambo, 2017, p. 107). The 2013–2017 period was signified by the renewed domination of ZANU–PF and Robert Mugabe; at the same time, the economic situation continued

worsening. ZANU–PF, however, was prone to factionalism, and in the context of tensions between the First Vice-President Emmerson Mnangagwa, supported by the Zimbabwe Defence Forces, and First Lady Grace Mugabe, backed by the younger G40 faction, President Robert Mugabe was forced to resign by the Zimbabwe Defence Forces, and Mnangagwa took power (*Herald*, 2017b; Chikowore and Davis, 2017; Pilling, 2017). In July 2018, he won the presidential elections while ZANU–PF received the parliamentary majority. In their electoral strategy, ‘ZANU–PF achieved the “sweet-spot” of competitive-authoritarian elections, allowing just enough freedom to make them appear credible but not enough to risk losing’ (Beardsworth, Cheeseman and Tinhu, 2019, p. 583).

It is in that rapidly changing and severely contested environment characterised by political polarisation, economic decline, growing authoritarianism and political violence that people shaped their visions of the past, present, and future of Zimbabwe. By the early 1990s, many Zimbabweans urbanites had started feeling that post-Independence Zimbabwe was not modern and developed enough, that progress had been halted or even reversed. This started well before economic informalisation really hit the urban areas, although after ESAP this sentiment seems to have been amplified. John Hoffman (2012, pp. 142–143) recalls:

I was struck even in 1990 when I was in Zimbabwe how black people often said how much better things were under the Smith regime. Reading the Zimbabwe press on the internet one often comes across comments that under Smith people had education, jobs and healthcare – under Mugabe they have nothing.

Developments in Zimbabwe since the late 1990s, such as the formal economy collapse, informalisation and infrastructure decay, further challenged the notion of progress. Jeremy Jones (2010) argues that the economic crisis blocked the ‘straight’ development path in Zimbabwe. ‘Straightness’ here refers to conducting business and doing things in conventional and proper ways and a socially accepted and respectable manner regulated by formal and informal rules. As Jones points out, at a personal level, ‘straightness’ refers to a routine, for example, going to work every day at the same time, working certain hours, and returning home

from work at the same time. He suggests that due to economic informalisation, ‘straightness’ was disrupted both at the broad level of the country’s progression and at the lower level of conducting everyday business. ‘Straightness’ fits what James Ferguson calls ‘the expectations of modernity’ (Ferguson, 1999). In the collective imagination, the country was supposed to follow a straight progress path (Jones, 2010, pp. 296–297). It has been argued that some political measures, such as the fast-track land reform, were supposed to stimulate this particular modernising development path, but for the urban population they resulted in a development hiatus, and people had to return to what was called ‘hunting and gathering’ (Ibid.). Because of the worsening economic conditions, people were ‘caught in a historical vortex, devoid of progression’ (Jones, 2010, p. 297). On the individual level, the *kukiya-kiya* economy that resulted was not ‘straight’ or ‘modern’ by definition as it is about hustling and dealing rather than doing things in an established and regulated manner. At the same time, the aspiration for doing things in a ‘straight’ manner persisted (Ibid.).

Jones (Ibid.) compares the Zimbabwean situation to that of Cameroon, which Achille Mbembe and Janet Roitman (1995) describe as in a ‘stupor’ in which individuals cannot tell if the situation they are in is accidental or a new normal and when the ideals and reality do not synchronise. As a result, people struggle to adapt to the reality, make decisions, and plan for the future. They believe that their country is ‘no longer part of the evolution of history’ (Ibid., p. 338). Jones (2010, pp. 289–290) argues that the profoundness of the crisis in Zimbabwe drove people into a state of paralysis where they are busy surviving, but their ‘personal and national development has come to a standstill’.

Indeed, people in the informal sector have struggled to imagine the future of Zimbabwe, particularly in the context of the post-2013 economic situation which further worsened after the brief improvement under the GNU. During my interviews with informal sector actors, they kept referring to the history of the country. People often thought about the 1980s as the ideal times ‘when things were good’ while now things were wrong, and it was very hard for most people to

make a living. That was why many of them resorted to vending which, in their thinking, had everything to do with survival and nothing to do with modernity. The frustration people experienced because their modernist expectations clashed with their survivalist reality affected their experience and understanding of their citizenship. People reflected on why it happened, who was to blame, and, most importantly, how they fitted into this system and existed in it (this issue will be further explored in Chapter 7).

Tonderai (Interview, 21 December 2017) worked informally at Mbare flea market during the GNU period. He recalled how he felt about the past and explained what idea of development he considered plausible:

[the] GNU period felt like the 1980s – the times we missed a lot. Transport, food, cash were available, prices were falling down. [The i]nformal sector diminished during the GNU... If jobs are coming, the informal sector will diminish. You have to learn new skills, there are companies who pay more if you learn new skills. People in Zimbabwe want to work. We are hard workers... We were paying rent [for a market stall at Mbare flea market] to [the council]. We expected them to build sheds or cloakrooms for us and put security. Government and local authorities were divided – they should be working together. During the 1980s we had a nice marketplace.

Tonderai's idea of the good future for Zimbabwe was firmly grounded in the past. He wished for the return of the strong and united government and local authorities who would bring order and deliver services to people, including to those in the informal sector, like they did in the past.

For Holly (Interview, 5 January 2018), a cross-border trader and a vendor, the 1980s–1990s also seemed like the dream times, although she was born in the late 1980s and could not have any memory of the welfarist and 'modern' 1980s:

In [the] 1990s, it was good. I could go to school; I finished my O-levels.¹⁷ Even though it was a little bit difficult at that time, a little bit, but your mum would go to work, your dad would go to work, as a family we were surviving and had a life of not struggling too much, like now... [In the] 1980s–1990s, then parents could have ten kids and all of them could go to school. Right now, it is hard to send one kid to school... They [the government] should learn what was there in [19]80s and bring it back, and it's not hard for them to bring it back because there are lots

¹⁷ O-levels (General Certificate of Education Ordinary Level) is awarded after the completion of Forms 3 and 4.

of people who like Zimbabwe, and if those people could come back again, it would be good. We could go back to the 1980s.

Her dream for Zimbabwe was the revival of the welfare state and formal economy which she believed should be done by the government, through attracting back foreign investors. Similarly, Tsitsi (Interview, 29 December 2017), a vendor, also spoke fondly of the past of Zimbabwe and dreamt of the return of people who, she believed, helped the Zimbabwean economy thrive in the past:

We need a good government with people at heart. I personally think if we manage to have those white people again here to open up industries and even give them farms back that were given to black people – some of them are totally doing nothing. We need their help. We alone, I don't think [we can manage]... We still need help. We still need help. We still need help. And I don't think it's a two-day job or a one-week job as far as this country is concerned... Our former president [Robert Mugabe] was a little bit adamant because he thought he could do it alone, he didn't need those white guys. But going back down the memory lane, [we had production, and the quality of the produce was much higher than it is now]... I personally think that to improve our economy here in Zimbabwe, we alone cannot do it ourselves. We need some investors and I think western countries could have pity for ordinary Zimbabweans and lifted those sanctions...

She associated modernity and progress with the industrial production and quality of this production which, she claimed, had deteriorated over the 1990s and 2000s. For these reasons, she considered exercises and policies such as land redistribution illogical and emphasised the need for foreign and whites' assistance for the reindustrialisation of the country.

The divide between the modernist thinking and survivalist reality grew stark in Zimbabwe in the aftermath of the post-1998 economic crisis and found its expression in people's vision of the future of Zimbabwe. This vision of the future was grounded in the past and formed an essential characteristic of people's mindset in the devastating economic conditions in urban Zimbabwe. It was strongly based on the ideas of urban modernity and the belief in the state as the leading actor of the national development.¹⁸

¹⁸ 'Government' is implied by 'state' for these purposes as the state's leader is the government.

§ 3. 'NO LONGER THE SUNSHINE CITY': THE MODERNIST URBAN IMAGINATION AND ECONOMIC INFORMALISATION IN HARARE

As discussed in Chapter 2, the notions of modernity were crucial in urban Rhodesia and post-independence Zimbabwe. The post-1998 crisis in Zimbabwe and its physical manifestations, such as street vending, dilapidated infrastructure, and failing service delivery, have significantly affected the image of Harare as they are not seen as modern by urban residents, local authorities, or the national government. The desire to restore the modern urban image and the reality of the informal sector as a source of livelihood have further exacerbated the modernist mindset–survivalist reality disconnect and contributed to the stigmatisation of the informal sector by politicians and individuals with informal sector livelihoods themselves.

Harare (and earlier Salisbury) has long been regarded by both its residents and the government as one of the best cities in Africa. In 1971, Salisbury adopted 'Sunshine City' as the publicity slogan which substituted the earlier nickname of the 'City of Flowering Trees' (BBC Monitoring Service, 1971, p. 5). Salisbury's favourable climate was the source of its new nickname. In the post-colonial period, the name 'Sunshine City' encompassed the city's modern urban planning, order and cleanliness as well as favourable weather conditions.

As mentioned above, urban disaffection started emerging in the mid-1990s (Holland, 2008) and grew due to the worsening economic crisis. Beacon Mbiba (2017) uses the '*zhing-zhong* city' metaphor to discuss Harare after economic informalisation in the discussion of coping strategies and conditions of informality in contrast with the 'Sunshine City' metaphor. *Zhing-zhong* originally referred to cheap Chinese goods of poor quality, but in the context of the decaying infrastructure and broader informalisation, people started using it to describe 'anything, not just goods, perceived as being inferior or having second-grade status such as inferior infrastructure, governance systems and ideas' (Mbiba, 2017, pp. 378–379).

The narrative of Harare no longer being the Sunshine City emerged in the media and political discourse in the early 2000s. In 2002, the newly elected MDC Harare mayor Elias

Mudzuri claimed that ‘Harare [would] be a [S]unshine [C]ity again, devoid of litter and potholes’ (Mudzuri quoted in Chimhete, 2002). At that time, mass media and politicians regarded poor service delivery, especially refuse collection, caused by the urban and broader economic crisis as the primary reason for Harare losing its Sunshine City status. In 2003, the *Zimbabwe Independent* (Mukaro, 2003) published an article titled *New Brooms Can’t Clean Sunshine City* discussing the disarray in the city caused by poor service delivery, the inability of the recently elected Council to resolve these issues, and the worsening economic situation that had forced people into street vending.

The narrative in the media further developed and evolved in the mid-2000s. The *Standard* in 2005 wrote about *Mourning the Passing of the Sunshine City* where ‘one [could] only look at the once verdant streets, the dysfunctional streetlights and the filthy alleys in the central business district, which [had] been turned into “stench town”’. In 2006, the *Financial Gazette* (2006) described Harare as the ‘[S]unshine [C]ity–turned–sewage farm’ in an editorial about the urban service delivery crisis and the interference of the Ministry of Local Government in urban issues (see also Ncube, 2006). The ‘no longer the Sunshine City’ narrative continued into the late 2000s and persisted in the 2010s as the economic, political, and social crises have not been resolved. The *Herald*, the major Zimbabwean (state) newspaper, alone has published 10 articles and editorial pieces perpetuating this narrative from 2011.

In the 2010s, the media narrative of Harare no longer being the Sunshine City expanded and also shifted from poor service delivery, particularly waste collection, to the vast presence of people with informal sector livelihoods, especially street vendors and hawkers, in the CBD who were said to contribute to the disorder, congestion, litter, and spread of disease. The *Herald’s* 2011 article, for instance, described the changes in the Sunshine City: ‘a walk along First Street makes someone who left the city a decade ago gawk; it is a completely different story with most of the hawkers parading their belts, imported stockings, compact discs, shoes, medication,

textbooks, cell phones and lines' (*Herald*, 2011b). The *Zimbabwe Independent* in 2014 highlighted the issue of street vending that damaged the image of the city:

Once admired by many across the continent and beyond, Zimbabwe's capital has undergone a tragic transformation that has left it a pale shadow of its former majestic self. Harare is now an eye-sore with the mushrooming of 'tuckshops' — small clothing shops selling cheap imports mostly from China, Dubai and South Africa which are sub-divided into mini-shops dealing with different products. Hundreds of vendors line the streets, virtually blocking passage on the pavements (Mambo, 2014).

The *Standard* in 2018 reproduced this narrative:

Although the epithet was about the sun that shines on Harare most of the year, it also had a lot to do with the fact that the city was so clean, so clean that some visitors from the so-called developed world would complain that Harare was not 'African' enough citing the uninterrupted running water, roads without potholes, street lighting and no garbage on the streets among many other positives. But that was then. Harare has lost its lustre and is now characterised by craters on the roads, dead street lights, burst sewer pipes, inconsistent running water (when available, the water is not safe to drink), streets that have been turned into an open air market and garbage all over the place (Mafundikwa, 2018).

More recent articles described a similar situation:

Everyone who has lived in Harare for the past two decades or so has painfully watched the capital city lose its past glory and the moniker Sunshine City disappear from the lips of all and sundry.... More than a decade without a drop of tap water for some suburbs, mounds of uncollected garbage, wafting stinks of air from the grid-lined alleys, commuter omnibuses that rattle, screech and stop at will in the CBD, tells nothing but the story of a dying city. Cry our beloved Harare (Guvamombe, 2019).

The stigmatisation of vendors, who are blamed for damaging the image of Harare CBD, was not only perpetuated by mass media but was also enforced by top-rank politicians. Former President Robert Mugabe said of Harare in his address to the ZANU–PF Youth League: 'Harare is filthy. There is garbage all over the city and vendors are everywhere even in the streets causing chaos and disturbing the smooth flow of traffic. We have failed and must come up with a plan' (*NewsDay*, 2017b).

The urban problems that Harare has faced cannot be attributed exclusively to inadequate service delivery and vending. John Chimunhu (2011) of the *Zimbabwean* indicates that there are broader changes, including the exponential growth of Harare, that posed new

problems. As the urban expert Dr Sasha Jagu suggests in that piece, ‘Harare and Salisbury are like chalk and cheese’. Despite that, both state and private media’s imagination about Harare as a (once) modern and respectable city has persisted. In an article published in the *Herald* in 2017, the journalist Leroy Dzenga (2017) used the narrative of a senior man named Mr Chizanga to illustrate the lost modernity and respectability of Harare CBD:

I would thoroughly iron my trousers and carefully comb my Afro-hair with patience. You had to look important when you are walking into town, especially Harare’s First Street... During those days it was unheard of that a person would sell roasted maize along First Street, or in the city centre. These days you can find someone sewing in the middle of the road downtown.

Dzenga indicates that in the past people compared Harare to London because of the urban planning, architecture, and order, but with time it turned into ‘a caricature of the city that brought such international comparisons’ and ‘a city of vendors’.

The pattern of these and other mass media publications (*Herald*, 2012b; 2013a; 2013b) is similar: Harare after the onset of the economic crisis is compared with Harare of the 1980s and 1990s or colonial Salisbury, highlighting its bygone modernity, supreme urban planning, order, cleanliness, and respectability. Then, the impact of the economic and political crisis is discussed, such as disintegrating infrastructure, failing service delivery, lack of regulations for commuter omnibuses and street vendors, and obstruction of public spaces by vendors.

In 2012–2013, people started to engage in the reproduction of this narrative using social media as well. For instance, a search on *Twitter* using keywords ‘Harare’ and ‘Sunshine City’ (*Twitter*, 2020b) shows that prior to 2012, individuals did not reproduce this narrative. Many tweets refer to sunny weather in Harare which justifies its nickname. From around 2013, the narrative of Harare no longer being the Sunshine City started appearing in tweets and comments of Zimbabweans (13 tweets lamenting the loss of the Sunshine City status in total) which could be linked to the worsening of the economic situation and infrastructure after the end of the GNU. Some users highlighted characteristics like ‘dirty’, ‘overcrowded’, ‘vendors everywhere’, and ‘filth’ while others shared their contribution to restoring Harare’s Sunshine

City status and cleaning rubbish from the streets. Some users complained about corruption, governance issues, misallocation of funds, poor service delivery, and interference of the Ministry of Local Government in the work of Harare City Council (on the latter, see Samukange, 2014; Share, 2014; Gumbo, 2014; Chiripasi and Zulu, 2014). The issue of street vendors who have been said to obstruct the pavements and roads and thus destroying the Sunshine City status has also been raised by *Twitter* users. Some suggested that they should be relocated to designated sites while others were irritated with the inconvenience that they caused by placing their goods on pavements. One of the users posted an archival photo of Harare and pointed out that it was truly the Sunshine City because there was not a single street vendor.

There have also been debates on *Twitter* regarding the eviction of vendors from Harare CBD. One such debate happened when the government once again ordered the eviction of vendors on 20 September 2018 due to the health hazard they were said to pose amidst the cholera outbreak (Mhetu, 2018; Munhende, 2018). Some people suggested that it was essential to restore the modern and respectable image of the Sunshine City to which vendors did not belong while others were concerned with the need to preserve people's livelihoods. As mentioned in Chapter 1 §3, it is likely that many Zimbabwean *Twitter* users are formally employed or have stable livelihoods, and as these tweets show, many endorsed the marginalisation of vendors and agreed that their livelihoods were not 'modern' and so damaged the image of the city.

Interestingly, informal sector actors also contributed to the narrative of Harare no longer being the Sunshine City. Tsitsi (Interview, 29 December 2017), a vendor from Harare, discussed the issue of CBD street vending and the authorities' approach to evicting vendors from this area:

they say they want to clear up [the CBD], that it's no longer the Sunshine City, but if you clear up, what is going to happen to these people? How are you going to help these people? Open up industries, we need cash in our banks, everything should be normal. I don't even like what Harare is now. When I was growing up, my mum used to work at OK [supermarket] on First St. And when I was in Grade

6, vending wasn't like this. There were vendors, every country has got vendors, but it wasn't like it is now. To me, I don't even like the way it is. Harare is no longer nice. It's no longer the Sunshine City. We are like Nigeria, so to speak. I've never been in Nigeria, but just looking at their movies, maybe we are a part of it. Harare is a nice place, but now because of hardships, the government officials, whatever...

Tsitsi compared Harare to Nigeria, which is associated with informal and criminal economic activities due to its portrayal in films. Holly (Interview, 5 January 2018), a cross-border trader and vendor, elaborated on this idea:

Yeah, it [Harare] is becoming like Nigeria. It's because there is no job creation... I think the best way is if they opened food marketplaces. The best way would be marketplaces. Not out of town because if they put those places out of town, who would come there? People are in town, not out of town... That for them would be a better way to help people survive. They can't chase us to where I can't make even a dollar a day. It is not right.

- *Why is Zimbabwe compared to Nigeria in a negative way? [Nigeria's] economy is doing quite well, isn't it?*

Well, it's like... Zimbabwe is good. Nigeria is like the richest country, but a lot of them, what can I say, they are smugglers there, lots of thieves... It's not like Zimbabwe. Zimbabwe has rules, and people here in Zimbabwe, they understand the rules. In Nigeria, you can't walk at 8 o'clock, 9 o'clock [in the evening because of crime rates], but here in Zimbabwe, you'd be free with midnight walking because there is not much thieves, and people know their rights.

- *Have you ever been to Nigeria yourself?*

No, I've read a lot about Nigeria.

For both Holly and Tsitsi, Nigeria was an unfavourable comparison because urban Nigeria is juxtaposed with modern, clean, regulated, safe, and respectable Harare. A disorder associated with the informal sector, in their view, damaged the image of Harare as a modern city, but they are struggling to reconcile the desire to 'make Harare the Sunshine City again' with the prevalence of the informal sector as a primary source of livelihood. For instance, although people with informal sector livelihoods generally view evictions of vendors from the CBD as an evil policy, they suggest that the modern look of Harare CBD is vital for the international image (see Figure 2 for a picture of CBD vending in the very heart of Harare near the Town House). Tonderai (Interview, 21 December 2017), a civil servant with a long experience in the informal sector, explained: 'Zimbabwe is looking like Abuja congested with the informal sector. To attract investments, it's necessary to clear the CBD'. However, unlike some of the Twitter users

cited above, he did not put the blame on vendors but explained the vending situation in the CBD as a consequence of ZANU–PF policies and politics, including political patronage and establishment of parallel party structures and militias used to control markets, housing and bus terminuses (Kriger, 2012):

2008 was very difficult because it was when the scarcity of food and cash happened. We couldn't find money in our banks, there was no basic food in the shops... When we were towards the 2008 elections, ZANU–PF came and overpowered us in all our stalls [at Mbare flea market], and they put their members [see Figure 3]. Some people who survived on those things, they ran away from Mbare. Some people would come to seek refuge in Harvest House [the MDC headquarters], and they started selling things in the streets in town. The reason why people started doing this is because most people in Mbare were victimised. ZANU–PF were now victimising even their own people who they thought had something to do with the MDC. They took stalls, tables, shops. Since people were surviving on these things, they started moving to town selling things in the streets. That's how people started congesting the town. It became more expensive to come to Mbare than to buy in the city centre. It was easier and cheaper to buy tomatoes in Mbare, but now people would buy in town because it was easier now. So, you find out from that time until now all streets in Harare are full of vendors (Interview with Tonderai, 21 December 2017).



Figure 2. *Informal economic activities in the area between the Town House and Cleveland House (where the Department of Works, City Planning and Development is located): street vendors and mshikashika ('pirate' taxis). Source: Kristina Pikovskaia (2018).*



Figure 3. A view of a market stall at Mbare flea market which, as an MDC activist claimed, was seized from him by pro-ZANU-PF militia. Source: Kristina Pikovskaia (2016).

The narrative of Harare no longer being the Sunshine City has been powerful in expressing people's grievances about the decay of the modern and respectable city, economic growth, order, cleanliness, and public services. Although people presented these issues, including, the vast presence of street vendors in the CBD, as a consequence of government policies, the narrative has contributed to the stigmatisation of vendors as disorganised, chaotic, filthy, not respectable or modern, and a health hazard. The disconnect between the mindset and reality has resulted in a predominantly negative attitude towards the informal sector, which is seen as a harmful phenomenon but at the same time one of the very few sources of livelihood.

As discussed in Chapter 2, in Zimbabwe, employment (or a labour contract) was a foundation of urban citizenship in the colonial era and was closely tied to notions of respectability, modernity, and social mobility. Economic informalisation has had a drastic impact on the job market as the formal economy has effectively collapsed. Despite the prevalence and persistence of the informal sector from the late 1990s, people have viewed formal employment as the ultimate goal which is an expression of the disconnect between the modernist mindset and survivalist reality in the urban informal sector. This has significant implications for worker identity in the informal sector as people have tended not to view their informal activities as ‘work’ or ‘job’ and perceived it as a survival option. There have been, however, slow changes as some people in the informal sector redefine the notion of ‘work’ to fit the harsh economic conditions.

The informal sector has been widely perceived as a temporary phenomenon by both politicians and informal sector actors. It has been seen as an alien phenomenon since, as discussed in Chapter 2, Southern Rhodesia and Zimbabwe before the ESAP had a small and regulated urban informal sector. There was a broad expectation among people with informal sector livelihoods that the formal economy would be kickstarted soon, jobs would be created, and people would migrate from the informal sector to the formal. As the anonymised employee of a resident’s association, Gibson (Interview, 6 April 2018), explained,

The informal economy in Zimbabwe has become more like a parkade when you park your car and go somewhere. Everyone is coming to the informal sector – they are in transit... So, if you go to someone who is selling vegetables, he is a former engineer for a certain company... So, for him, selling is [being] in transit. He is waiting to be repatriated to the formal sector. That’s the anticipation. People see it [the informal sector] as a stopgap measure... That’s why they [people and local authorities] are not much interested in infrastructure [of the informal economy] and whatever.

– *It seems that even people who have never worked formally have the aspiration to get a formal job. Why is it?*

It’s because of the way we are trained. If you go to school, you then graduate and think: ‘I should get a formal job’. If someone comes from rural areas to Harare,

the only thing he or she thinks is that they have to go to work. Even if someone actually makes money in the informal sector, they will still come [to the formal sector] if there is an opportunity because there is work security, that is very important. Because when you are in the informal sector, these people are battling with policies which were put in place even in the colonial era, and even those who believe that those policies can be changed, they are suffering the backlash from the policies of the past, their [vendors] wares can be taken [by the police] and so on. You come to the streets for survival, not for permanency.

In addition to the rigid modernist mindset, the lack of regulation in the informal sector, damaging interventions by the local authorities and government, and the lack of infrastructure have contributed to the perception of the informal sector as a temporary self-designing and self-executing solution to urgent problems. A significant implication of the disconnect between the mindset and reality has been the worker identity of people who make a living in the informal sector. Worker identity refers to the perception of oneself as a worker and is crucial for placing such issues as work conditions and security on the policy agenda and for political empowerment of workers (Hill, 2010, pp. 3–4). The problem with the informal sector (not just in Zimbabwe) is that people who make a living in this sector do not perceive it as work. Elizabeth Hill (2010), for instance, argues that the informal sector is not ‘the economic dead-end’ and does not necessarily mean that people there are doomed to be poor and rightless, and that recognition of women in the informal sector in India as workers and their unionisation has had a significant positive impact on their rights as workers, agency, and political empowerment. In Zimbabwe, however, the notion of ‘work’ and ‘job’ has been historically constructed as formal full-time employment, and many people held onto this definition.

Many of my informants viewed vending, cross-border trade, and informal small-scale production as a temporary occupation and a short-term solution to the social and economic crisis – they ‘were not working’ even if they were full-time (and more than full-time) vendors and cross-border traders. They were ‘whiling away time’ and waiting for ‘proper’ jobs which would be brought by someone from above (the government) or outside (investors).

The interpretations of work and job slightly varied based on fine distinctions made by informal sector actors. Some people saw their informal economic activities like work or proper

businesses because it was what they were doing full-time and what brought them money (Interview with Hope, 5 January 2018). However, many people were convinced that there could not be proper jobs in the informal sector. For instance, Tsitsi (Interview, 29 December 2017) used to be a domestic worker which she considered a job, albeit as a ‘bad’ one (she was poorly paid and badly treated), but at the time of the interview, she was a full-time vendor trying to support her children, and she claimed that she ‘hustle[d] at home’ and did not work. Similarly, Charles (Interview, 5 January 2018) used to be formally employed – he was a chef and had worked in the catering sphere at several hotels in Harare. However, as he was not fairly paid at his last formal job, he quit. He decided to work for himself, taking up casual cooking jobs and catering for parties and weddings. He, however, did not see it as ‘work’ or ‘a job’: ‘nowadays I’m at home, I don’t work... I’m stuck at home. [There are] no jobs in this country’. For Tsitsi and Charles, a ‘job’ implied being in stable employment and working for someone rather than doing casual work or being self-employed.

For other people, a ‘job’ means a stable economic activity with a solid social security package. Alicia (Interview, 25 March 2018) had a long record of formal employment. Her last place of work was the Avenues Clinic, but once she did not get the attachment, she had to resort to informal economic activities to earn a living – cross-border trade and informal trading. When she was telling her employment history, her language changed significantly: discussing her formal employment experience, she used the words ‘work’ and ‘job’ extensively, but talking about cross-border and informal trade, she only used terms ‘buy’ and ‘sell’. For her, these informal economic activities were ‘not a good thing, not a good job’. She explained:

for me ‘a job’ means that when you are not feeling well, you are given medical treatment, you are on a payroll... Today I don’t have medical aid. I don’t have a payslip. If I make 10 dollars, I just have 10 dollars... That’s the difference between ‘a job’ and ‘informal’.

Unionisation in specific economic sectors might also have a positive impact on worker identity. For example, Bongani (Interview, 4 May 2018), a combi conductor became a conductor in 2010. At that time, he did perceive it not as ‘work’, but just as an activity that

helped him put food on the table. However, after he joined the Zimbabwe Union of Drivers and Conductors, his attitude changed because he now had a representative body that could potentially stand for his rights and with which he identified: ‘it was bad before, but not that we have a union, I perceive it as work’.

Some people do not consider their informal economic activities ‘work’ because it rarely brings money – the primary criteria of a job for them is the ability to earn a living which has become increasingly hard in the informal sector due to the worsening economic and financial crisis. Emma (Interview, 1 May 2018) clarified:

to me, if I do farming... If you do something for people, it is a proper job. But nowadays no one has money. So nowadays I can do some poultry farming, but at the end of the day, there are no customers for my chicks. I end up again seeing that it is not a good job because there is no money.

The modernist definition of work has also been perpetuated in popular culture, such as Zimdancehall. As discussed earlier, this is a music genre in which the youth act both as producers and consumers of this music.¹⁹ Zimdancehall songs, for instance, talk of the hardship of young people in the highly challenging economic condition and collapse of modernist expectations. Some of these narratives are similar. For instance, JNR Tatenda’s (2016) protagonist explains that as a street vendor, he tried to sell various goods, but nothing quite worked, and he cannot find a job anywhere. Hwindi President (2016) explains that it is irrational to tell people to search for jobs because there are simply none, and only precarious informal sector activities are left for the youth. Creator Fire (2015) states the same – that there are no employment opportunities, and the informal sector is the only way to eke out a living. These narratives demonstrate young people’s frustration with the absence of ‘jobs’ and their forced retreat to ‘hustling’, ‘dealing’, and informal economic activities which they do not recognise as work.

¹⁹ The songs about the informal economy and challenges associated with it cited here were selected and translated from Shona by my research assistant, a University of Zimbabwe student, Peter.

The disconnect between the modernist definition of ‘work’ and ‘job’ in the formal economy wage work domain and the informal sector reality allows space for political speculation and abuse of terms which further damages informal sector actors. For instance, before the 2013 elections, ZANU–PF promised to create ‘2.2 million jobs’ meaning formal jobs, and the party held onto this promise for several years (*NewsDay*, 2015d). However, this promise was not fulfilled (Ibid.; Manayiti, 2016). In contrast, the economic situation worsened, and more people were retrenched (Ibid.). In 2017, however, ZANU–PF legislator Psychology Maziwisa took an attempt at reinterpreting the ‘2.2 million jobs’ promise and inverting the promise of modernising transformation:

We said we were going to create 2.2 million jobs and when you define what a job is, it includes casual jobs. So for example, you can use the word job in this way, ‘I gave him a job to wash my clothes.’ And that sentence is grammatically correct. We have created millions of jobs in the informal sector. In fact, we have exceeded the 2.2 million jobs. We are now, at the last count, including the informal jobs at over three million jobs (Maziwisa quoted in Zingoda, 2017).

In this example, it is visible how the disconnect between the modernist thinking and survivalist reality allowed for misinterpretation of the term for political purposes, and how it exacerbated the position of people in the informal sector. Politicians may have recognised informal economic activities as ‘work’ when it was convenient for them, but they did not grant any job security and did not improve work conditions. In contrast, they continued to harass and evict vendors threatening their livelihoods.

The majority of people I interviewed would prefer to work for someone in the formal setting rather than working for themselves informally and upgrading their businesses (Interviews with Kuda, 26 February 2018; Prosper, 23 March 2018; Agatha, 26 March 2018; Joseph and Faith, 8 March 2018; Wendy, 23 April 2018). However, as economic informalisation persisted, slow changes occurred in people’s perception of informal economic activities as work with some individuals with informal sector livelihoods, especially younger people, dreaming of growing their businesses and considering themselves entrepreneurs and businesswomen/men (Interview with Hope, 5 January 2018; with Munya, 27 March 2018). This perception, however, was not

pervasive or shared by everyone (or even the majority of people) in the informal sector, and it is not possible to say when exactly it started happening.

In the Zimbabwean popular culture, discussions about the notion of ‘work’ in the informal sector context can be seen from as early as 2013. Zimdancehall performer Seh Calaz (2013) reclaims the word ‘work’ in the context of street vending. His argument is that vending is work because it allows people to put bread on the table even though it is not seen in society as a respectable job. The singer explains that his ability to earn a living from various informal sector activities is a gift of God and even though such economic activities are looked down upon by society, they allow him to put bread on the table for his family. He proceeds to name the activities he is ready to get involved in to make a living: a dealer, street vendor, combi conductor and tout. He says that he will persevere even if the City Council officials and police chase him because it is his job, and he is not ashamed of what he does to survive. He asks others not to condemn him because he works all day long to earn money for his family. Another Zimdancehall performer, Simple Claude (2016), calls informal economic activities ‘work’ and ‘labour’ but claims that in severe economic conditions, all of those are pointless and barely allow a person to survive. The narrator explains how his meticulous daily labour does not bear any fruit, how he has nothing to eat let alone saving anything for tomorrow. He cries that his life is full of pain and suffering and that the world is a miserable place.

It is, however, crucial to note that seeing informal sector activities as ‘work’ or a ‘job’ is not pervasive in Zimdancehall either. One of the most acclaimed Zimdancehall performers Winky D (2016), in the song called *Twenty-Five* discusses modernist expectations with which urban dwellers grow up, such as obtaining a formal job, and the fact that the economic reality does not match these expectations: the protagonist says that when he was younger, he thought he would not suffer at the age of 25, that people on the street (like street vendors) were poor because they were lazy, but for him, it would not be hard to provide for his family; but life was

much harder for him than expected. For him, an informal sector activity falls short of the understanding of a ‘proper’ (formal) job.

The change towards perceiving and treating informal economic activities like work has been occurring very slowly (and for some not at all) despite the twenty-year persistence of economic informalisation. There are still firm modernist beliefs in what a ‘proper’ job should look like, which comes from the colonial urban mobility regulations, the notions of respectability, formal employment and modernity discussed in Chapter 2. As mentioned above, the lack of worker identity, stigmatisation of informal economic activities and the perception of them as temporary harm political empowerment and unionisation of people in the informal sector. This, in its turn, may have a negative impact on informal sector actors as citizens as it gives space for the government to politically exclude groups of people who are seen as jobless, unproductive, not contributing to the economy, and not belonging to the city (see Chapter 7).

§5. ‘YOU NEVER GET A LIVELIHOOD OUT OF GOING TO SCHOOL’: THE CRISIS OF MODERNITY AND THE EDUCATION-ECONOMY DISCONNECT

Education has long been a pivotal issue for Zimbabweans who believe in its inherent and instrumental value. From the colonial period, education, especially higher education, had the power to pave the way to upward social mobility, first and foremost, a ‘respectable’ job, i.e. formal employment (see Chapter 2 and, for example, Summers, 1994, 2002; Interviews with Tinashe, 5 January 2018; with Pride Mkono, 2 February 2018; with Makomborero Haruzivishe, 27 February 2018). The changing economic conditions, however, affected the perception of education with regards to socio-political outcomes, especially among the youth. As the education-employment nexus was the primary pathway for upward social mobility in urban Zimbabwe, the collapse of this nexus has made individuals challenge the political system and modernity premises upon which it is founded. Lived citizenship of school-leavers and university graduates is no longer firmly connected to the idea of education as a ticket to a better

life, greater income, respectability, or higher social status as their practices of citizenship challenge the linkages between education and modernity and the assumptions of the political community of urban Zimbabwe about education, employment, and respectability.

Academic interpretations of the role of education in the socio-political life of an individual, social group, and society vary. One of the primary debates regarding the role of education looks at education as a tool for social and cultural reproduction as opposed to a tool for social mobility and change. I suggest that in Zimbabwe, education has historically performed both the social mobility and the social reproduction function, but with the expansion of economic informalisation, the social mobility function of education started failing.

Scholars have traditionally viewed education as a mechanism for upward social mobility through which individuals from less advantageous economic and social backgrounds could advance their position within society. Max Weber (1958) has suggested that education may facilitate the meritocratic selection of people for more prestigious positions and occupations or it may maintain an existing monopoly of a particular social group. Following Weber, Pitirim Sorokin (1927) proposes that education systems not only prepare individuals for employment but, more importantly, select those who will gain access to more privileged positions and greater social rewards, such as prestige and status, thus ensuring upward social mobility of individuals. This function is connected to the notion of citizenship: changes in an individual's position in society caused by social mobility via education lead to changes in her/his position within power structures and relations with political actors, thus affecting an individual's status in a political community.

The social reproduction approach challenges the idea of education being primarily a social mobility mechanism. According to the social reproduction approach, education acts as an instrument with which class structures re-enact themselves by recreating rules, norms, beliefs, and practices (Althusser, 2001; Demaine, 2003). Pierre Bourdieu further develops this concept and introduces *habitus* as a term to describe a set of dispositions that are shaped by objective

conditions and tend to become embodied and re-produce themselves even when objective conditions change. He calls the family and the school the main sites of the *habitus* of culture – the sites which transmit values, practices, relations, attitudes, beliefs, and ideas to individuals that they carry through their lives and pass on to future generations (Bourdieu and Passeron, 1990; Nash, 1990; Dalal, 2016). Education has a role to play in the reproduction of existing class relations and is a conservative tool stripped of a liberal belief that it is an instrument for social change, upward social mobility, social justice, and equality. Despite that, Bourdieu (1986, pp. 243–248) suggests that education, as an institutionalised state of cultural capital, i.e. a degree or academic qualifications, can be converted into economic capital. Bourdieu also argues that educational institutions affect the aspirations of young people through teaching, marking, and re-producing particular subjectivities and discourses (Bourdieu, 1993, p. 97). In this approach, education is clearly central to citizenship since it acts as a *habitus* site that shapes an individual's behaviours, practices, and beliefs, including those related to politics and ultimately re-produces her/his position in society and within power structures, including the political space.

The history of education in Zimbabwe shows that educational institutions worked as sites of social reproduction establishing and re-enforcing particular convictions and beliefs, such as beliefs about modernity and civilisation, as well as tools for social mobility. Education in Southern Rhodesia was racialised, with a dual education approach – for blacks and whites. The idea for education for Africans was that it should be practice-oriented rather than academic to create a pool of semi-skilled black labour (Kanyenze *et al.*, 2011). However, as seen in Chapter 2, education played an important role in social mobility and was closely linked to colonial notions of modernity and civilisation besides being a requirement for the franchise. In the 1950s, Southern Rhodesia adopted a policy of 'multiracialism' which, to an extent, penetrated educational institutions as well, and educated Africans were deemed more respectable and, hence, gained more opportunities to exercise citizenship through new multiracial parties and organisations (West, 2002; Shutt, 2015). Higher education also offered space for political

activism which is central to the understanding of students' citizenship and their impact on national politics. From 1962, the Rhodesian Front attempted to curtail the multiracial project, and African students focused on the nationalist agenda. The university, however, managed to maintain the principles of academic freedom and multiracial project, and black student activists reclaimed their political voice as that of 'intellectuals' and continued their education instead of joining the nationalist movements (Hodgkinson, 2018).

By 1980, Zimbabwe had a racialised education system, with education for blacks being mostly technical and vocational, and for whites – academic. In the first decade of Independence, the new government democratised the education system, recognising education as a fundamental human right. The government adopted a policy of free universal primary education for all. In 1980–1990, enrolment in primary schools increased by 242% while enrolment in secondary schools went up by 915.9% (Kanyenze et al, 2011, p. 304–305). Secondary education experienced a greater expansion in 1980–1985 than during the entire colonial period (Zvobgo cited in Kanyenze, 2011, p. 305). The number of technical and vocational education and training institutions also increased to correct racial imbalances in education (Kanyenze *et al.*, 2011). Student activism at that time moved towards the socialist agenda, university students saw themselves as revolutionary intellectuals, and their protests aimed at South Africa and later ZANU–PF in the aftermath of the Willowvale corruption scandal (Hodgkinson, 2018, p. 337). Although eventually student leaders were arrested, the 1980s political studenthood (as Dan Hodgkinson [2018, p. 12] defines it, 'a specific subjectivity that students used to assert themselves as agents of political and institutional transformation') produced leaders who aspired for politics outside the ZANU–PF domain, and they eventually fulfilled these aspirations with the growth of opposition politics and the establishment of the MDC in 1999 (Hodgkinson, 2018, pp. 337–338).

After 1990, nine more state universities opened in addition to the University of Zimbabwe (Kanyenze *et al.*, 2011). The number of school-leavers and university graduates

increased exponentially, but the economy was not attracting investments and was struggling to accommodate school-leavers and graduates (Knight, 2002). The ESAP was expected to kickstart the economy and provide jobs. Significant budget cuts in the educational sphere accompanied this process. The content of education, however, remained unchanged, and in 1999 a Presidential Commission of Inquiry into Education and Training was formed that noted that the educational system produced school-leavers and graduates with non-marketable skills and was mainly academic rather than practical. Further exacerbation of the economic, financial, and political crisis, however, put significant constraints on the development of education in Zimbabwe (Kanyenze *et al.*, 2011), which further exacerbated a situation where most school leavers and university graduates could not find a job. The 1990s' university student activists carried on with the confrontational protest approach of the late 1980s. As a part of the liberalisation policy, the education-related financial burden on students increased, and students resisted these measures and continued to claim their intellectual authority. They found a way into a new opposition space created by the coalition of human rights activists and the labour movement (Hodgkinson, 2018, pp. 231–233, 339). These forces recognised student activists as intellectuals with established protest traditions, and political students became an avenue for a transition into leadership positions within this new opposition politics, which resulted in the formation of the MDC (*Ibid.*).

The unprecedented economic informalisation of the 2000s, coupled with the undermined quality of education, significantly changed the socio-economic role of education. It has produced a class of educated young people (at the secondary and tertiary levels) who remained unemployed and could not, using Bourdieu's terminology, convert their cultural (educational) capital into economic capital. Education's social mobility function, which has been in place from colonial times, has deteriorated as well. The 2000–2009 period was also the last time when student activists could explore the transition into opposition party politics (Hodgkinson, 2018, p. 240). The harsh economic conditions and the relationship with the MDC

and its civic partners significantly shaped student activism at that time as student activists lost a significant degree of autonomy to the MDC. Many activists saw the formation of the GNU as a betrayal, and they effectively lost the space in which their political studenthood was recognised (Ibid.).

As a result of the severe economic conditions of the 2000s, a massive social group of unemployed school-leavers and university graduates emerged which shifted the social composition compared to the 1980s or the colonial times when such a group was much smaller as education was not readily available. It has been estimated that 30,000 young people graduated from universities and tertiary colleges every year in the 2000s, many of whom resorted to informal economic activities to earn a living (*DailyNews*, 2013). This social group exists in the gap, as it were, between modernist convictions in education as a social mobility mechanism and the economic reality where unemployment is overwhelming. Education in Zimbabwe, therefore, has mostly lost its social mobility potential as only a few school-leavers and university graduates manage to secure formal jobs, and the progression path from student activism to partisan activism has collapsed. Not only have students lost the activism–opposition politics social mobility route, but their citizenship was also negatively affected as their stance in the political community and their ability to influence politics worsened. However, education and family, to a large extent, continue to re-produce the modernist mindset as well as notions of respectability which shape people’s behaviours, attitudes, and ideas about education and citizenship.

Recent graduates and current students recognise the disconnect between education and the actual economy and the labour market as a critical issue affecting their livelihood and modernist expectations. Pride Mkono (Interview, 2 February 2018), the 2011–2013 President of the Zimbabwe National Students Union (ZINASU), explained what impact economic informalisation had on youth:

the first [impact] is disjoint: the skills and capabilities offered in the institutions of learning, universities and polytechnics, became withdrawn from the economic reality. You graduate with your diploma or degree, but there is no industry that would absorb you with those skills, and you then need to find the ways of surviving and living off the informal sector, informal economy. This disjoint made the value of education just academic: we just go to school, but you know, you never get a livelihood out of going to school.

Young Zimbabweans carefully started to question the modernist assumption that good formal education, especially higher education, is an absolute prerequisite for success in a 'modern' understanding as, first and foremost, formal employment with a stable income. Ashleigh Pfunye (Interview, 9 February 2018), a student and ZINASU Secretary-General, said: 'when we were growing up, we were told that the education is the key to success, but then, in reality, those, who told us that education was the key, have run away with the door. So, we are left with the key, but we have nowhere to enter'. Lisa (Interview, 23 March 2018) was a young woman who had to give up her dream of having a formal job because of the economic crisis. Her family story illustrated how school and family – the primary sites of *habitus* – reinforced the modernist assumptions in children and youth and how young people coped when their modernist dreams clashed with the reality:

my dad was formally employed, but my mum wasn't formally employed because she wasn't educated. Although she worked informally, she had dreams for us to be [formally employed]. She didn't want us to live the life that she was living. She wanted us to have a better future, and when you go to school, you find out that there is a better life out there, and you'd be like: 'I want to do this, I want to be this'. Me, I wanted to be a human resources officer. I told my parents... First thing I wanted, I wanted my mum to stop vending, I wanted her to rest because she was vending all day long. I wanted her to rest. My dad went to work, and he would tell me: 'You know what, my daughter, those who have an office, they live a good life. You have to go to school, you have to get an education so that you could have a better life and not the life that we are living'... The thing about my dad is that he did not discriminate against me, you know as they sometimes say that a girl should stay at home. I have four brothers. My brothers were not as brilliant as I was. And my dad said: 'You didn't pass the O-level. There is no way you could do A-level. She passed the O-level, I'll take her to A-level'. He wanted us to have a better future... So, I had a dream that was cut short [because Lisa could not finish her A-level due to financial difficulties and lack of teachers at her school]. Well, it was not [completely] cut short – I am still hoping that one day... It's like now we are so involved in the informal sector that we want to have our businesses, it's like we diverted our dreams according to our economic situation. I used to dream that I will have my own office, now I dream that one day I'll have my own shop, my own bakery. We just live according to what we have here.

Lisa's narrative demonstrates how young people acquired modernist assumptions about education leading to employment and upward social mobility. It also shows how these modernist beliefs clashed with the harsh economic reality and how a young person has to adapt and adjust her dreams and expectation so that it corresponds with the situation on the ground.

The mantra of education as the key to success and its loss of relevance due to economic informalisation find expression in the popular culture of the youth, such as Zimdancehall songs which speak directly to the youth about issues that are crucial for young people. Zimdancehall song *Kusvikira Rinhi* ('Until When') by Junior Tatenda speaks of the challenges young people face under the formal economy collapse and their precarious livelihoods. Junior Tatenda says that he is tired of the promises of the older generation that education leads to employment, but very few young people are actually employed. Meanwhile, many have struggled to have a good life. Another Zimdancehall artiste, Seh Calaz, raises these issues in *Kurarama* ('Living') and explains that young people thought that their efforts and their families' investments in their education would result in them gaining better job prospects, but in the end, they have precarious informal livelihoods, and there is no difference between educated and uneducated youths.

Winky D's *Twenty-Five* has a particularly compelling narrative of a youth who tells about his modernist lifestyle expectations and their collapse under the pressure of the economy. He then proceeds to talk about how he studied without thinking about whether the skills he learned are applicable and how frustrated he was when facing the reality of unemployment. He concludes by saying that if he knew it would be like this, he would have started hustling earlier. Similarly, Hwindi President in *Sei Ukuti Tsvagai Mabasa* ('Why Are You Saying 'Look for Jobs') asserts that despite the popular modernist belief, education does not guarantee you a job in Zimbabwe, and those young people who have invested in acquiring multiple qualifications, in the end, find them useless.

What happens here is the frustration with the impossibility of converting the cultural, institutionalised capital (a formal education, a degree, or a certificate) into economic capital, to

use Bourdieu's theory, due to the imbalance of the labour supply and the job market. Jobs, i.e. formal 'respectable' employment opportunities, are scarce as the formal economy has collapsed. However, the *habitus* sites (family, school, and university) continue re-producing the modernist values in which education acts a status symbol and a primary social mobility tool in the urban context.

The youth have become incredibly frustrated by the inapplicability of their education to real life. They have started criticising the education system for being inflexible and suggesting ways to improve it to meet the reality on the ground. As Nqobizitha Mlambo, a coordinator of the Coalition for Unemployed Graduates (Interview, 19 February 2018), put it, 'while we wait for re-industrialisation, we are getting older'. Makomborero Haruzivishe, the 2012–2014 ZINASU Secretary-General (Interview, 27 February 2018), said: 'our educational system was created to train human robots who would follow the instructions. They are trying to introduce a new curriculum, but it is about learning languages. It has nothing to do with production'. The government has attempted to address the need to restructure and revise the curriculum. For example, agriculture became a compulsory subject from the primary level. However, the outcome of curriculum revision has been limited and not attentive to specific needs of pupils and students: 'universities and institutions of learning should really become practically oriented, give them [students] skills and make them realise that, okay, much as you want to learn this, but the real set of skills that will help you survive in the world [such as production and business skills, for example]' (Interview with Pride Mkono, 2 February 2018).

Despite these apparent problems and the disconnect between the promise of education and reality, which to an extent has undermined the instrumental value of education, some young people have re-produced the modernist mindset they grew up with and that the family and the school perpetuated. They continued enrolling in educational programmes at universities and polytechnics even if their first degrees did not pay off. As Pride Mkono (Interview, 2 February 2018) explains,

...primarily it has to do with our culture. For a long time, we've been cultured to say: 'No, I'll go to school. Education is the key to life. If you go to school and complete university, you'll get a good job, you'll be paid a salary, and you'll have a good life'. So, that's our culture. Parents, even the poorest of them, sometimes spend a lot of resources on sending their kids to school. If you are a bright child, your parents will go... all ways, they'll sell the cattle, their little produce, and they will fund the education of their child until they reach the university level. There is hope that the economy will be restored. I remember one thing we used to say to each other in college: 'You know, let's keep accumulating those papers. When the economy finally kicks, we'll be in a position to get the top jobs'... We, Zimbabweans... love going to school and speaking good English, and we will always be willing to invest in it. It's a symbol of status: 'You know, my son went to university. He has a degree in this, and he's now doing his Master's or PhD'. It brings status in the community, which is not directly connected to [the] economic growth and development of the society.

Tinashe, a young man who, despite having a university degree in Development Studies, re-sells second-hand clothes at Mupedzanamo market in Mbare,²⁰ keeps going to college, obtaining diplomas and certificates, and diversifying his academic specialisation: he has obtained certificates in Purchasing, Marketing, Counselling, and HIV/AIDS. Tinashe hopes that it will help him secure a regular job once the economy improves and formalises. Also, he claims that education helps him to be heard in his community and at the market where he works: 'if you are educated, they'll be listening to you'. Partly, an instrumental value of education is preserved regardless of job opportunities for graduates. Even though the education–employment social mobility route cannot be realised in Zimbabwe due to the formal sector collapse, education may infer other social mobility opportunities, namely through enhancing one's social status.

The symbolic and status value of education, especially higher education, has been incredibly important to Zimbabweans. It, to no small extent, derives from modernist values according to which a better education leads to a better job. In the economic realities of Zimbabwe, this may become a trap as academic education disconnected from production or practice may not yield any financial results. Some young people escape this trap by refusing to continue their formal education. Kuda (Interview, 26 February 2018) obtained a degree in

²⁰ Mupedzanamo is a large second-hand clothes informal market in the oldest township of Harare.

Politics but ended up selling cell phones in the streets as he could not find any other job. He was born in 1994 to a housemaid and a soldier; his school education was funded through a scholarship programme. However, when he entered the University of Zimbabwe, he had to pay his tuition fees. He entered an undergraduate programme in Politics. Kuda said that his primary desire was to bring pride to his family through his education and further employment. In 2014, he had to drop out of school because he could not afford the tuition, which is how he became exposed to the informal sector – he started selling mobile phones in Harare city centre. At that point, he did not think he would do it after graduation. By 2016, he was able to save enough money to continue his academic pursuits and successfully graduated in 2017. Unfortunately, he could not find a formal job and returned to selling phones in the streets. He claimed that his professors encouraged him to apply for the Master’s programme as he excelled at his undergraduate studies. Although he was passionate about Politics, he refused to continue his studies as he did not see any use of his first degree in these harsh economic conditions.

Some argue that education, especially tertiary education, may even undermine economic adaptability because it is disconnected from reality. As Stephen Mwenje (Mwenje, 2016) suggests, university degrees and specialisations of unemployed graduates constrain their entrepreneurship skills and zeal, and the difficulties of small and medium enterprises (SMEs)²¹ in Zimbabwe are attributed to ‘entrepreneurial skills deficiency’ (Zimbabwe Ministry of Finance, 2015 cited in Mwenje, 2016, p. 50). Nqobizitha Mlambo (Interview, 19 February 2018) explains how young people grow up with a modernist mindset of working for someone rather than being an entrepreneur: ‘I was trained to be a job-seeker’.

Due to economic informalisation and limited flexibility of the education system, education in Zimbabwe no longer guarantees a livelihood, let alone a ‘respectable’ job. The persistence of the modernist mindset, the symbolic value of education, and the hope for a return to ‘modernising development’ in the foreseeable future have made young people and their

²¹ Micro-enterprises in Zimbabwe is often used as a euphemism for informal economic activities.

parents invest in education, including higher and tertiary education. The unwritten rules of the political community of Zimbabwe have changed: the state effectively reformed the education system in the 1980s and 1990s to expand access in a growing economy, but with the formal economy collapse, there are financial constraints on further reform of the education system. In the end, the government can no longer sustain the level of economic development which would allow citizens to use education as a tool for upward social mobility, and it cannot reform the education system so that it equips young citizens with knowledge and skills essential for a livelihood in the informal sector. This disposition affects citizenship as Zimbabweans are, once again, virtually abandoned by the authorities in a disastrous situation where they struggle to make a livelihood.

The education system in Zimbabwe has long been a crucial space for shaping and expressing one's citizenship. The changes related to the use, benefits, advantages, and perception of education in Zimbabwe result in individuals re-considering the contours of citizenship and premises upon which citizenship is based. Although education, to some extent, still preserves its symbolic value and can enhance one's status within society, and some graduates still hope that they will be able to convert their educational capital into economic capital, young people have started questioning the modernist assumptions that education leads to employment and social mobility. They challenge the urban notions of respectability which are based on employment and education and they seek to justify their engagement in 'not respectable' informal economic activities. They have started questioning educational policies and curricula which are disconnected from economic reality and do not prepare them for real life. Finally, they challenge the ZANU–PF government's inability to implement its obligations to citizens.

§6. CONCLUSION

Economic informalisation and the broader economic, social, and political crisis have had a drastic impact on the everyday life of Zimbabweans, which shifted to the 'survival mode'

as the previous aspirations for a modern lifestyle were no longer applicable. Individuals devised numerous strategies to deal with the urban and economic crisis and, essentially, survive in extremely harsh economic conditions. In the political imagination of individuals, mass media, and politicians, however, these coping strategies in the informal sector do not fit the modernity framework which has been perpetuated by the state institutions, mass media, and people from colonial times.

The ‘crisis’ and attendant economic informalisation jeopardised ZANU–PF’s modernising development programme and the modern features associated with urban areas, such as order, cleanliness, public service delivery, and supreme urban planning, from the colonial period. This led to disaffection with Harare as a promise for a modern lifestyle from the mid-2000s. This modernist mindset–survivalist reality disconnect shaped a ‘back to the future’ vision among Zimbabweans, many of whom started looking into the past to find a model for the future of Zimbabwe. Harare’s residents came to see the 1980s as the ideal times, when economic and social development were plausible and when the state actively participated in the development and cared about citizens. This loop does not necessarily mean that the notion of progress in Zimbabwe is in crisis. Instead, it suggests that in some people’s view, the informal sector should not belong in Zimbabwe’s future, or at the very least should be limited, as it is not modern.

The decay of urban infrastructure and proliferation of informal economic activities in Harare challenged the modern image of the city, which has been promoted by the government, local authorities, mass media, and people from the colonial era. From the mid-late 1990s, Harare no longer lived up to the ‘Sunshine City’ status. The narrative of ‘Harare no longer being the Sunshine City’ as an appeal to return to urban modernity has been perpetuated by mass media, the government, and urban residents, including those who worked informally. The group that experienced more backlash than anyone else has been street vendors in the CBD. The insistence on limiting their right to the city based on modernist assumptions about the order

which are detached from reality has strong implications for the nature of citizenship of informal sector actors, as explored in greater detail later in the thesis.

The disconnect between the modernist mindset and survivalist reality is also manifested in people's interpretation of work. Most people in the informal sector do not see their livelihoods as 'work' or 'a job'. There is a conviction that 'a job' means stable employment, social security, and a real income which, again, stems from the colonial period. The lack of work identity among individuals with informal sector livelihoods adds to their marginalisation and negatively affects their position within power structures of the country and the city, as well as undermining their claims to urban citizenship in their own eyes as well as those of others.

Another layer of the modernist mindset–survivalist reality divide has been the collapse of the education–employment nexus in Zimbabwe. Education has been historically seen as an avenue for upward social mobility, and families invest a lot of money into their children's educations, including higher education, hoping that they would be gainfully employed and achieve a higher social status. This fits well with the broader modernist mindset, but due to the economic crisis and collapse of the formal economy, the vast majority of graduates cannot find employment, and to an extent, education loses its value. The mindset–reality and education–economy disconnects experienced by many young Zimbabweans has pushed them to challenge and reconsider the values, such as respectability and modernity, that have historically served as sources of citizenship in urban areas.

Overall, the great divide between the modernist mentality and survivalist reality has shaped many aspects of people's lives from the beginning of radical economic informalisation in the late 1990s and has influenced political responses to economic informalisation and the needs of people in the informal sector from key political actors, as explored in the following Chapter.

CHAPTER 4.

‘STAND UP AND DO IT FOR YOURSELF’: ECONOMIC INFORMALISATION, PARTY POLITICS AND PEOPLE’S RESPONSES

§1. INTRODUCTION

The divide between the modernist thinking and survivalist reality has been pervasive and informed all aspects of people’s lives in the context of economic informalisation, including politics. This Chapter focuses on the politics of the government, local authorities, and political parties towards the informal sector in Harare and discusses people’s responses to their policies and approaches. It argues that political parties in Zimbabwe are insufficiently receptive of or responsive to the changing economic environment owing to their ongoing embrace of modernisation ideas, which generally resonate with people’s hopes and aspirations. In response to the ambivalent approach of political parties generally, the Zimbabwe African National Union–Patriotic Front (ZANU–PF) government, and often opposition-controlled local authorities, people partly disengaged from formal politics but maintained aspirations for the government to kickstart the economy and local authorities to deliver public services. In the meantime, they developed a self-reliant citizenship practice which, to a large degree, characterises the lived citizenship of this era and is based on practices of ‘adaptive resistance’ (Musoni, 2010) to economic and political challenges as a survival mechanism. The underlying reason for the ambivalent and frequently harmful approach of key political actors to the informal sector, the development of self-reliant citizenship and adaptive resistance, coupled with a desire for a return of the state to people’s lives in a productive manner, is the great divide between modernity and survivalism explored above. It has informed relationships among political parties, and it is partially accommodated in people’s practices of citizenship.

Understanding the approaches of top-level political actors, such as political parties, the government, and local authorities, to the informal sector is crucial to see the political underpinnings of the changing understanding of citizenship in Zimbabwe (see also Chapter 7).

It is often in response to actions, policies, and statements of these political actors that people start challenging existing assumptions about what it means to be a citizen and negotiate specific aspects of citizenship, such as productivity, taxation, or employment status. The way people approach the actions of political parties, the government, and local authorities, is also important to understand the priorities and interests that people have in high-level politics. This Chapter attempts to unpack both political actors' attitudes to the informal sector and people's adaptive and reactive responses to the policies and actions of these political actors. This provides an essential background for the understanding of citizenship in the long run, as it is in this environment that the grassroots ideas and practices of lived citizenship shift.

The Chapter engages with the academic literature on the relationships between political parties and the informal sector, political patronage, and resilience and resistance in the context of economic crises and political oppression. The Chapter is based on multiple primary sources. Official documents of political parties, such as election manifestos and policies, allow us to see how important the informal sector is to these parties and what role it would have in the country that those parties envisioned in future. They also demonstrate the attitudes of political parties toward the informal sector and the desired changes in the informal sector. Mass media (state and private) sources are used in this Chapter to compensate for the empirical gap created by my limited ability to interview ZANU–PF and government officials. Both the interviews and mass media publications and reports give an indication of the approaches of ZANU–PF as a party and the ZANU–PF government to the informal sector. Mass media and social media sources are also used to supplement the interview data on the opposition parties' and local authorities' attitudes and interventions in the informal sector. Interviews are particularly important as this method gave space for politicians and officials to explain attitudes, policies, and specific actions in the informal sector and to interpret them, and for individuals in the informal sector to express their opinion and to narrate their experiences of engagement with local authorities, the government, and political parties, and express their expectations of them.

The Chapter, first, discusses the impact of economic informalisation on the ZANU–PF party and its government and their approaches and policies with regard to the informal sector. Then, it looks at opposition parties, mainly the Movement for Democratic Change–Tsvangirai (MDC–T) (and, from 2018, the MDC Alliance, or MDC–A), and local authorities such as the City Council that are dominated by the MDC–T. Third, the Chapter discusses the responses of informal sector actors to the approaches and interventions of political actors. Finally, it considers adaptive resistance as a major survival mechanism that became particularly crucial in harsh economic and political conditions.

§2. ZANU–PF, GOVERNMENT MINISTRIES AND ECONOMIC INFORMALISATION

As seen in Chapters 2 and 3, the ZANU–PF government has stigmatised and marginalised the informal sector and made numerous attempts to destroy it. They have argued that vendors add to the ‘disorder’, ‘filth’, and spread of disease, particularly in Harare Central Business District (CBD). The authorities have used biopolitical rationalities that justified policing the population to secure the continuation of the political system. Michel Foucault suggests that the use of biopolitical racism as a governmental rationality serves an important purpose of preserving and securing a life of the society in almost biological terms: ‘the death of the other, the death of the bad race, of the inferior race (or the degenerate, or the abnormal) is something that will make life in general healthier: healthier and purer’ (Foucault, 2003, p. 255). In the Zimbabwean case, it is more accurate to speak of biopolitical stigmatisation and marginalisation rather than biopolitical racism as it is an economic group that has been persistently condemned and side-lined by politicians, mass media, and individuals – people with informal sector livelihoods, particularly street vendors and cross-border traders, due to the widespread belief in their ‘unproductiveness’, ‘obstruction of public space’, ‘tax avoidance’, and ‘health hazard’. This may be seen as the reverse side of biological citizenship discussed in Chapter 1: if in biological citizenship people demand certain rights on the basis of the healthcare

situation which severely affects certain groups, in biopolitical stigmatisation people are denied certain rights (in this case, socio-economic rights, the right to the city and to a livelihood) on the basis of 'health hazards' which they or their economic activities present.

By employing biopolitical stigmatisation in relation to the urban informal sector, particularly street vendors as, arguably, the most vulnerable and exposed group, the ruling party and the government achieved several results. Firstly, they have further fragmented the informal sector. As mentioned in Chapter 1, there is a lack of unity in the informal sector, and the ruling party and its government separate 'good' informal businesses (for example, those that are 'productive', i.e. manufacturers and farmers; those who operate from designated sites and pay fees to the local authorities; those who cooperate with the government and provide political support to the ruling party) from 'bad' informal activities which are labelled as disorganised, hazardous, and unproductive, or allied to the opposition. Second, they have created a narrative in which they shift the blame for the economic and financial collapse as well the broader urban decay and the loss of modernity as a lifestyle from ZANU–PF and assign it to the socioeconomic group whose lifestyle, in their understanding, contradicts that urban modernity and developed economy – street vendors (particularly in the CBD), cross-border traders, and backyard industry producers. This plays out in the context of the 'great divide' between the modernist mindset and survivalist reality almost like a cognitive dissonance: the informal sector is inevitable because the formal economy has collapsed, but the formal economy does not develop because the informal sector is too large and unregulated. Third, it is also about political control and the suppression of opposition in urban areas, which are accomplished through official and parallel ZANU–PF structures and political mobilisation of people in the informal sector.

The academic literature on political parties' relationship with the informal sector generally shows that ruling parties are highly likely to establish a clientelist relationship with informal sector actors to ensure their electoral support. Carole Rakodi (2004, pp. 87–88), however, suggests that when parties treat people in the informal sector as 'vote banks' in the

electoral process, people should not be seen as passive subjects as they actively bargain with political parties for more beneficial arrangements and transfers and choose the party to vote for based on their needs or beliefs about possible improvements. Vote bank politics is highly visible in political arrangements in Bangalore, Kumasi, Mombasa, or Ahmedabad.

Partisan patronage and clientelism in Zimbabwe have been rampant in rural areas, and with the expansion of economic informalisation and political losses to the MDC, they also became widespread in urban areas. As the party in power with considerable administrative and financial resources, ZANU–PF managed to adapt to the drastically changed economic situation and use it to its advantage by developing vast patronage networks in informal markets and housing to ensure its urban support base (Kriger, 2012; McGregor, 2013). ZANU–PF’s patronage approach has established itself at different levels and in distinct socio-economic contexts. For example, Davison Muchadenyika (2015) discusses urban housing as a contested sphere between local authorities and the ruling party and argues that ZANU–PF used the housing sphere as a resource for political patronage to mobilise residents to attend rallies and vote for the ‘right’ party in elections. Norma Kriger (2012) argues that ZANU–PF increasingly used personal networks and violent methods which greatly contributed to informalisation and privatisation of politics. As a result, ‘parallel’ party structures solidified in various spheres. For example, *Chipangano* was a notorious ZANU–PF militia group that operated in Harare, controlled bus termini and informal markets, and was notoriously violent with those who did not support the ruling party. Jocelyn Alexander and Kudakwashe Chitofiri (2010) argue that ZANU–PF used various political patronage mechanisms to control people’s behaviour. During the Government of National Unity (GNU), ZANU–PF increased surveillance in Harare and developed party militia groups to control limited resources in an extremely hard economic situation (McGregor, 2013). ZANU–PF managed to turn economic informalisation to their advantage and effectively used it as a political space for control and mobilisation.

While patronage networks were a novel development for urban Zimbabwe, there are strong continuities with colonial and early post-colonial policies towards the urban informal sector (see Chapter 2). Busani Mpfu (2010) suggests that since the 1960s, low-income earners (including those in the informal sector) were marginalised in urban Zimbabwe and denied the right to the city. The postcolonial state continued this trajectory by imposing the discourse that low-income earners (and particularly informal earners) belonged to the rural areas once again. Deteriorating economic conditions, however, increased the growth of informal economic activities in cities often through very precarious low-income activities. Mpfu further suggests that the Third *Chimurenga* further alienated and side-lined the urban poor since ZANU–PF did not need to rely on their votes anymore, and marginalisation and evictions of people in the urban informal sector continued.

The engagement of the ruling party with the informal sector, however, has been more complex than mere patronage: it can be best described as ambivalent but predominantly harmful. The statements, policies and approaches of the government and ZANU–PF to the informal sector have been contradictory, with different institutions working in opposite directions (Interview with Godfrey Kanyenze, 12 August 2016). ZANU–PF has mostly focused on the informal sector because of its electoral mobilisation capacities, ‘unmodern’ looks, which have been extensively stigmatised (see Chapter 2), and a perceived negative impact on the mainstream, formal taxable economy. However, there were some measures that did support informal economic activities. Some governmental institutions have tried to boost micro and small enterprises, including informal ones, once economic informalisation became widespread, and to empower people economically. The parastatal Small (and Medium [from 2014]) Enterprise Development Corporation (S[M]EDCO) was founded in 1983 to provide financial support to small businesses and mainstream indigenous people in the economy. The funding came from the World Bank, Trade and Development Bank, and the Zimbabwean government. The Economic Structural Adjustment Programme (ESAP) negatively affected its activity as

there were challenges with currency and diminished funding from the World Bank. As Gladys Kanyongo (Interview, 9 May 2018), S(M)EDCO's chief executive officer, explained, economic informalisation also presented challenges to the activity of S(M)EDCO as there were fewer businesses that could meet the criteria to get assistance from the corporation, and the corporation focused on the legality of businesses as a major requirement (i.e. not being involved in any criminal activities, such as drug dealing or currency exchange), operation within the local authority jurisdiction, and tax clearance. As she clarified, formal registration was not the primary requirement due to the proliferation of the informal sector. Also, due to informalisation, S(M)EDCO started prioritising micro-enterprises and eased the entry requirements, such as formal registration, so that more people could get access to the funds and other forms of support.

Another institution that supported the informal sector from the beginning of massive informalisation, albeit selectively, was the Ministry of Small and Medium Enterprises and Cooperative Development (Ministry of SMEs). Tanaka, a former economist from the Ministry explained in an interview that it was formed in 2002 to support small and medium enterprises and especially the informal sector after massive retrenchments (Interview with Tanaka, 10 May 2018). The overall idea of the Ministry was to assist people in the early stages of establishing their micro and small businesses, thus empowering them economically during the transition period, and then let them take the initiative and 'stand up and do it for themselves'. Tanaka outlined what the Ministry did to support the informal sector between 2002 and 2018:

Some [people who were retrenched] were into trade, but the majority were going into manufacturing of whatever they manufactured in the industry.... The sectors where they concentrated, it was mostly furniture, retail, metal fabrication, and tailoring and clothing manufacturing.... People were to come to terms with this, and the government saw the need to start a ministry to cater to those people to make them come from backdoors, backyard manufacturing into open manufacturing in townships. We saw tremendous growth in metal fabrication in Mbare [at Siyaso]. Some of them formed cooperatives, some operated as individuals, but there was a lot of activity there. You could buy anything – window frames, door frames, anything metal fabricated. Within the city, the CBD, there were clothing manufacturers. They took up space in high-rise buildings in town; there were so many of them. There is a lot of activity in terms

of dressmaking, production of bed sheets, but mostly clothing. It's mostly dominated by ladies.... When the Ministry came up, we saw the growth in furniture making. I'm sure you've been to Glenview, lots of furniture-making there now. This is because of mentorship of the informal sector. We built a few stalls for those guys, and some owned those stalls. Then, we mentored young people to run the business and to produce. Within a short span of time, 4-5 years, young men moved out and started their own [businesses]. So, we have a big number now growing every year – leaving employment, starting their own industries. We started seeing a lot of accidents there, such as fires, and ILO came in to help. After we intervened, the ILO then helped us to bring the machinery. That did not stop high-density suburbs from continuing growing [industries].

She explained that besides infrastructure, the Ministry, with assistance from development partners, conducted training in entrepreneurship, business management, and finances. She claimed that the Ministry partnered with international organisations and donors in performing many programmes, such as the United National Development Programme, the International Labour Organisation (ILO), and the SNV Netherlands Development Organisation. One of the major problems of micro-enterprises and informal businesses was financial, and the Ministry partnered with financial institutions, such as Standard Chartered, Barclays, and CABS to open 'SME windows' to facilitate borrowing opportunities of small businesses and individuals with informal sector livelihoods. Also, the Ministry facilitated the creation of marketing opportunities for several small-scale businesses, started incubation programmes, and brought machinery for the incubation of some businesses through the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa. Tanaka also discussed the attitude that the Ministry promoted, which was aimed at stimulating self-employment and formalisation, and making people self-sufficient and not reliant on the government, funders, or employers:

It was not only the closure of factories, but also sensitisation by our Ministry for people to stand up and do things for themselves and not look for the government or other people to employ them, but to stand up and do it for themselves. It became a slogan of the Ministry – don't wait for anybody to come and help you, stand up and do it for yourself... Psychologically people were receiving us. They were receiving the idea of standing up for themselves and not depending on other people for employment. We were so proud of our people.

She justified the existence and proliferation of the informal sector and explained that due to the economic collapse, people had to take responsibility for their welfare, income, and

employment since there was no other option, although the government was ready to support the establishment of small businesses:

They [people in the informal sector] are trying to support their families. They do that because there are no jobs, they have no choice. Our base was also based on that – now that the company was closing, you have to stand up and do it for yourself because no one is going to come to employ you. It was not their choice; it was because these people were desperate to take care of their families. It's like a mother in the house: if the mother does not have food to put on the table, the mother stands up and does something. She can stand up and grow some vegetables, she can stand up and plough so that there is maize, she can keep chicken. Similarly, people who were out of employment had to do that...

The officially declared attitude of ZANU–PF in its election manifestos to the informal sector was generally positive and supportive, albeit not well elaborated. In the 2013 election manifesto, ZANU–PF focused on the informal sector as a major object of the work of its parastatal S(M)EDCO. The manifesto stated that ‘the [ZANU–PF] Government will revamp and capacitate the [SEDCO] to inject new capital from indigenised assets to promote financial inclusion in the informal sector by financing innovative projects that are run by youths and women’ (ZANU–PF, 2013, p. 93). S(M)EDCO activities were supposed to support ‘income-generating projects for innovative women and youths with demonstrable cutting edge ideas that bring people together by supporting their livelihoods’ (Ibid.). This approach was in line with ZANU–PF’s broader indigenisation and economic empowerment policy.

Soon after the party’s triumph in the 2013 elections, the ZANU–PF government adopted the Zimbabwe Agenda for Sustainable Socio-Economic Transformation (ZIMASSET) policy with a declared aim ‘to provide an enabling environment for sustainable economic empowerment and social transformation to the people of Zimbabwe’ (Government of Zimbabwe, 2013). It was a core part of ZANU–PF’s electoral campaign and started soon after the elections for the 2013–2018 period. ZIMASSET, however, was criticised by experts and politicians for being used for campaign purposes to attract voters and for the lack of consultation and engagement with stakeholders (Samukange and Mpfu, 2013; Samukange, 2013). Although the government claimed that the blueprint was a success only six months after

introducing it (*Sunday News*, 2014), the opposition and experts suggested that even if there was political will, corruption and lack of funding undermined the project (*Sunday News*, 2014; Samukange, 2013).

It can be argued that even the mere existence of institutions such as S(M)EDCO and the Ministry of SMEs was a positive sign indicating that the government cared about nurturing micro, small and informal businesses and supported a formalisation process; and indeed, some representatives of the SME sector shared this view. For example, Caesar Zvayi, the main state newspaper *Herald* editor (Interview, 3 May 2018), explained, the Ministry of SMEs championed the cause of the informal sector which should be seen as a way for black people to enter into businesses and a part of the broader indigenisation programme. Others disagreed: for instance, Lorraine Sibanda (Interview, 10 May 2018), the president of the Zimbabwe Chamber of Informal Economy Associations (ZCIEA), argued that in the ministry, ‘there was a partisan political affiliation, and it did not address the working poor holistically and realistically. A few cases were picked to say that they are successful, but you could still see continuing levels of poverty’. As Farai Maunganidze (2013, p. 4) notes, the Ministry was not seen as a ‘major’ institution by the broader government, and consequently was underfunded along with S(M)EDCO. Indeed, after the November 2017 coup, interim President Emmerson Mnangagwa restructured the government and closed the Ministry of SMEs altogether, appointing the former Minister of SMEs, Sithembiso Nyoni, as the Minister of Women and Youth Affairs (*NewsDay*, 2017a). Later in 2018, the Ministry was expanded to include SMEs as well. This shows that the post-coup government did not prioritise the informal sector and SMEs in general. Indeed, the development of SMEs and the informal sector did not fit anywhere in Mnangagwa’s *Zimbabwe Is Open for Business* mantra, the cornerstone of which was the attraction of foreign direct investment to industries and large companies rather than supporting domestic small-scale producers and businesspeople. The development of SMEs and support of the informal sector

have thus never been a priority of the government, although some seemingly good initiatives were introduced by the Ministry of SMEs.

In practice, the declared positive approaches, supportive policies and good intentions of the Ministry of SMEs and S(M)EDCO were obstructed by clientelist relationships and corruption. SME representatives from Maunganidze's (2013) study argued that most of the programmes of the Ministry were 'talk shows' aimed at wooing the electorate. Some SMEs that started the formalisation process eventually dropped it due to widespread corruption at the Ministry's Registrar of Companies Department. As a result, some operators remained informal and others chose not to renew their licences. Banele Dlamini and Danie Schutte (2020) also suggest that most government policies aimed at supporting micro and small enterprises failed as there was no pre-consultation with actors in this sphere and no true commitment to the development of this sector.

As leaders of an informal sector organisation (ISO) argued, most people in the informal sector were not aware of the help that was promised by the government and did not believe in its usefulness or accessibility due to partisan patronage and corruption (Interview with Hilary and Janis, 1 August 2016). Mudiwa (Interview, 8 May 2018), an informant from a governmental financial institution, argued that the partisan patronage problem was indeed present at some governmental institutions and programmes, especially those of the Ministry of Youth Development, Indigenisation and Economic Empowerment, but in her opinion, it was not an issue with the Ministry of SMEs. It was argued by the Parliamentary Portfolio Committee on Youth Development, Indigenisation and Economic Empowerment that the 40-million-dollar Youth Development Fund funded non-existent projects, was allegedly distributed through ZANU-PF patronage networks and the loans were never paid back (Langa, 2017; Murwira, 2017). Godfrey Kanyenze of the Labour and Economic Development Research Unit

Zimbabwe (LEDRIZ)²² thought that a partisan approach was common for the government in general, not just specific ministries (Interview, 18 January 2018).

The Glenview 8 complex which Tanaka mentioned has become one of the most famous manufacturing sites in Harare housing a vibrant carpentry community. While representatives of the Glenview 8 complex I interviewed (Interview with Moses, 12 April 2018) argued that the government supported them, helped establish the complex and build the facilities, and was not partisan, those carpenters who operated from the area opposite the complex in considerably worse conditions argued that all support was partisan and that they could not gain access to the complex as they were either pro-MDC or did not support the ruling party (Interview with Morgan and Michael, 12 April 2018). Studies have shown that entrepreneurs and manufacturers at the complex believed that although the government's policies aimed at supporting SMEs and the complex, in particular, seemed beneficial, their implementation was deeply flawed and did not achieve significant results (Nyamwanza et al, 2016). In addition, the complex experienced frequent fires (Kaiyo and Mabika, 2018; Samukange, 2015b; *ZimEye*, 2018a) which raises questions about the safety of these facilities.

Patronage also penetrated the cross-border trade. In 2016, the government introduced Statutory Instrument 64 which limited the import of some commodities, such as cooking oil and coffee creamer. The Mass Public Opinion Institute executive director Eldred Masunungure (Interview, 2 August 2016; 2 February 2018) suggested that this instrument should be seen as an attempt to 'capture the informal sector through licences' for the import of goods which were hard to receive unless one was a ZANU-PF member. Besides that, Statutory Instrument 64 had a broader detrimental effect on the informal sector and many cross-border traders and vendors relied on the products the import of which was now limited as a source of livelihood (Interview with Claire, 1 August 2016).

²² The think-tank of the Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions (ZCTU).

The Ministry of Local Government is another governmental institution which has played a significant role in the informal sector, particularly in Harare CBD. It took multiple attempts to clear the city centre of vendors, most notoriously, in 2015 when then Minister Ignatius Chombo threatened to deploy the army to evict vendors from the CBD and restore the Sunshine City status (Ncube, 2015; Nleya, 2015; see Chapter 3). After Chombo, Saviour Kasukuwere became the Minister. His first eviction moves started two days after he took office (see Matenga, 2015a). On 8 July 2015, the municipal police and pro-ZANU–PF ISOs tried to clear the CBD of vendors following a government directive. Vendors massively protested this move and threatened to withdraw their support from the ruling party in 2018 with some people carrying placards saying *Let's Meet 2018 Elections* (Newsday, 2015b). In response, Kasukuwere argued that the ruling party would not be 'blackmailed': 'so you think our party wins because of chaos? We don't thrive on chaos. We must not be blackmailed. You can't allow someone to take fish from [the] Mukuvisi [River] and start selling it to you or else they won't vote. We don't want that kind of blackmail' (quoted in Matenga, 2015d). A few months later, the government again ordered a clear up campaign before the International Conference on AIDS and Sexually Transmitted Infections to make the city centre look organised, clean, and presentable to foreign delegations (Matenga, 2015b). In May 2016, the ruling party, the national commissariat of which was run by Kasukuwere, ordered vendors to shut down for their businesses in an attempt to mobilise Harare residents to attend the May Day celebration at Rufaro Stadium in Mbare organised through the party's affiliate labour organisation, the Zimbabwe Federation of Trade Unions (Ncube and Vinga, 2016).

One of the key issues that signify that the government and the ruling party have not been truly interested in supporting the informal sector is the fact that different governmental institutions and agencies have often worked in opposite directions and not coordinated efforts with one another. It was particularly visible in the feud between the Ministry of Local Government and the Ministry of SMEs in the urban context of Harare. While the SMEs and

the informal sector's economic activities fall into the Ministry of SMEs' domain, it is the Ministry of Local Government that reigns over the urban planning and order issues and interferes with the opposition-dominated Harare City Council's policies. For example, in 2016, the Ministry of Local Government, Public Works and National Housing prohibited allocating land to housing cooperatives²³ – a move that in Harare had to be enforced by the City Council. All housing developments were now to be done by the relevant parastatal (Ruwende and Mukuwane, 2016), thus further consolidating urban development, planning and housing within the government. SMEs Minister Sithembiso Nyoni criticised the Ministry of Local Government for interfering with her Ministry's issues and claimed it was unlawful: 'I am in charge of cooperatives... I administer the Act and at the end of the day, I am the one in charge and if I do not pronounce a change that comes either through Parliament or Government Gazette, any utterances on that matter are null and void' (Nyoni quoted in Mhlanga, 2016). MDC-T Harare Mayor Bernard Manyenyeni responded to this by claiming the Council would not allocate land to any cooperatives: 'how we deal with our land is our business. We have an obligation to ensure that standards are maintained and people are protected from unscrupulous land dealers and her ministry has its own obligation' (Manyenyeni quoted in Mhlanga, 2016).

Another core issue that highlights inconsistencies in government policy towards the informal sector and different institutions within the government arises in one of the most politically contested areas – Harare CBD – and concerns street vending, or 'illegal' vending as the government and pro-government media call it. In June 2015, the government ordered vendors to vacate the CBD, clean the streets before they leave, register with the authorities and, if they want, acquire places at designated sites. The government and local authorities partnered with a private company *Imhanya* which provided facilities and booths for vendors.²⁴ All these measures were endorsed by the SMEs Minister (Mawonde, 2015). A few days later, President

²³ Housing cooperatives are one of the key tools for people with low income and informal income to get 'proper' formal housing.

²⁴ The scheme soon failed as the fares were too high for vendors, facilities not sufficient, and economic activity not vibrant enough compared to vending from various undesignated sites in the CBD (Muchava, 2016).

Robert Mugabe and First Lady Grace Mugabe blocked the eviction of vendors (*NewsDay*, 2015a). This measure was also endorsed by Nyoni who said at a meeting with a pro-ZANU–PF Queen of Grace ZIMASSET Trust that ZANU–PF was ‘for the people’ (Matenga and Manaviti, 2015). In February 2017, when the MDC–T-dominated City Council ordered another round of eviction of vendors from the CBD, SMEs Minister Nyoni criticised the move saying that it was inhuman, and vendors did not have anywhere to go. She was also displeased with the City Council for not coordinating the measures with her ministry (Nyakudya, 2017). After Mugabe called for the removal of vendors from the CBD in October of the same year (less than a year before the 2018 elections), however, Nyoni readily supported the idea presenting it from the perspective that it was supposedly beneficial to vendors: ‘we thank the directive [of President Mugabe] as this will make them [CBD street vendors] join the formalised sector for them to be able to access finance’ (Nyoni quoted in Sibanda, 2017). She also argued that vendors had to receive point of sale machines which would supposedly help their businesses (Ibid.).

ZANU–PF began to seek to separate ‘good’ and ‘bad’ informal businesses, condemning the ‘wrong’ ones. In 2017, Minister Nyoni responded to the municipal police chasing vendors from the CBD and called for the creation of more designated sites for vending. She argued: ‘I would like to appeal to local authorities that those people [vendors who operate from designated sites] should not be disturbed because they complied. There are many vendors; we should not fight the right ones. Let us find space for those who do not have space and help them’ (Nyoni quoted in Hwari, 2017). There was no short-term solution for ‘wrong’ vendors though, i.e. those who were seen by the local authorities and the government as illegal. Most of the designated sites were away from the CBD, and vendors did not think they could make a significant profit there (Interview with Wilton Janjazi, 1 August 2016).

After the coup, in the 2018 manifesto, ZANU–PF focused on its *Zimbabwe Is Open for Business* mantra but also promised to create modern vending stalls, enhance access to finance,

and stimulate formalisation of informal businesses, although there were no specific details on any of these points (ZANU–PF, 2018). In practice, and in parallel with Mugabe’s pre-coup government, evictions of vendors and their stigmatisation continued. In 2018, Minister Sithembiso Nyoni supported the evictions of vendors from Harare CBD due to the supposed linkage of street vending with cholera spread as a result of the unavailability of water and sanitation facilities at ‘illegal’ vending sites. She said: ‘let me be very blunt. We are no longer going to have vending anywhere, everywhere. Let us be as organised as we had started to be’ (Nyoni quoted in Ruwende, 2018). While the promise was made to create a conducive environment for vending with appropriate sanitation facilities and make vending organised in line with the modernist assumptions, vendors were still chased away and therefore deprived of livelihood.

In sum, the policies and attitudes of the ruling party and its ministries towards the urban informal sector have been complicated but predominantly negative for the economy, political environment, and people’s livelihoods. The few positive initiatives had a partisan character or were unknown to many people. Government ministries became one of the key actors that shaped the political environment of the informal sector and through their policies, and especially the poor implementation of these policies, has virtually put itself in opposition to the informal sector. Denying people’s rights to the city and to a livelihood, stigmatising them as a threat to order and public health, and continuously marginalising people in the urban informal sector, the ruling party and its ministries essentially labelled informal sector actor as ‘lesser’ citizens who deliberately violated the public order and should be controlled and confined to certain spaces identified by the government and local authorities. At the same time, occasionally employing encouraging and positive rhetoric about the informal sector and its potential, the ruling party used a carrot and stick tactic, particularly close to elections, to persuade people in the informal sector to vote for them.

The MDC was negatively affected by economic informalisation as had grown from the trade union movement and relied on the mobilisation of workers (Raftopoulos, 2009). The MDC, as well as other smaller opposition parties, have not engaged substantially with the informal sector. The informal sector agenda has occupied a marginal place in their political programmes, and the policy of the MDC-dominated Harare City Council has been unfavourable and at times hostile towards the informal sector. The opposition has generally been preoccupied with ‘re-modernisation’ ideas and as a result, has ignored the immediate needs of informal sector actors. This lack of interest in the informal sector may be explained by two arguments. Firstly, like many actors, the political opposition is preoccupied with the modernist narrative and is keen to formalise the economy and return it to the pre-collapse state rather than working towards short-term solutions for people in the informal sector. Secondly, from a political mobilisation perspective, after the GNU period, the MDC–T assumed that voters would support them simply because they were not ZANU–PF and did not campaign and mobilise people effectively in the informal sector.

The relationship between the informal sector and opposition parties in Zimbabwe has not received much attention from scholars, as many studies on the relationship of opposition parties with society explored civil society institutions, which have been close allies of the MDC(–T). The MDC’s engagement with the informal sector is however particularly important considering the urban roots of the political opposition and its close ties to trade unions, which weakened as a result of informalisation. The 2008 elections and their aftermath were an important period in the political development of Zimbabwe. They were characterised by extreme political violence, which meant that the MDC–T’s victory did not lead to it assuming office but rather to power-sharing negotiations between ZANU–PF and the MDC facilitated by the Southern African Development Community, and eventually the GNU. Many of the MDC–T’s actions during this period have been criticised. Firstly, as many scholars have argued

(Kriger, 2012; Cheeseman and Tendi, 2010; Hoekman, 2013), the GNU did not entail democratisation. As Michael Aeby (2018) suggests, there were minor democratic achievements under the GNU as ZANU–PF objected to any significant reform. However, the GNU helped reduce violent confrontation between hostile political elites and somewhat stabilise the economy. Secondly, the power-sharing negotiations and the GNU had a strong negative impact on the MDC–T’s relationship with its civil society and western allies and resulted in further fragmentation of political opposition. As Thys Hoekman (2013) argues, although the MDC had little manoeuvring space in the power-sharing negotiations, the fact that the opposition leaders agreed to the power-sharing agreement, which transferred it relatively little power, cast doubt on the MDC’s goals. Thirdly, civil society organisations criticised power-sharing negotiations as they were all but excluded from them (Hoekman, 2013). Finally, despite some economic improvements, the GNU did not manage to reverse economic informalisation (Chikweche and Mujeyi, 2015), and that did not contribute to a better vision of the MDC–T. Although the economy stabilised during the GNU period, to a large extent, due to the monetary reform and dollarisation promoted by MDC’s Tendai Biti who was the Minister of Finance at the time, economic informalisation persisted, and the informal sector’s problems did not ease (*Zimbabwe Independent*, 2010). After the MDC’s defeat in the 2013 elections, the economy continued spiralling downwards and the provision of social services further deteriorated (Choruma, 2016). Overall, there was a big difference in the state of the economy and public service delivery in 2009–2013 and 2013–2018.

For many years there was a lack of engagement between the MDC and the informal sector due to the prevalence of the modernist paradigm in which the informal sector did not fit well. For instance, in their 2008 political programme, the MDC–T mentioned the informal sector only once and very vaguely: ‘the MDC government will seek expert advice on how to develop the informal sector as a priority’ (MDC, 2008, p. 83). ‘As a priority’ signifies that they realised that economic informalisation was a significant issue, but the overall unelaborated

statement indicates that there was a lack of interest and will to develop and support this sector. As we saw in Chapter 3, the ideas about modernity and the image of a modern city still preoccupied urban residents generally, and in this image, there was little space for the informal sector, and this applied to the political opposition as well. Thus, in both the neoliberal agenda of the MDC–T and the nationalist agenda of ZANU–PF, there was little room for the informal sector.

The MDC–T subsequently changed its approach to the informal sector. In their 2012 Jobs, Upliftment, Investment Capital and the Environment (JUICE) policy (MDC, 2012), they discussed the informal sector and its role in the national economy:

A developmental state is needed to integrate the informal economy and promote a growth process in a manner that allows the majority of the labour force to be involved in productive activities. Integrating the informal economy is therefore an important building block of a strategy that is pro-poor, to create decent work and generate high growth. The informal economy will be crucial in the development and transformation of the Zimbabwean economy (Ibid., p. 14).

One of the primary goals for the informal sector stated in that document was formalisation: ‘given the extent of informalisation, there is need to promote formalisation and transition to the mainstream economy. To achieve this requires a comprehensive and integrated strategy that eliminates the negative aspects of informality while preserving the significant job creation and income-generation potential of the informal economy’ (Ibid., p. 19). However, in the 2013 election manifesto, the MDC–T (2013) did not mention the informal sector at all and only spoke of ‘unemployment’ and ‘joblessness’.

In 2018, before the elections, the MDC Alliance²⁵ presented the Sustainable and Modernisation Agenda for Real Transformation (SMART) as their election programme. The informal sector received some attention in the document, but the focus, once again, was exclusively on the formalisation of the informal sector (MDC Alliance, 2018). The primary goal for the informal sector was ‘to overcome the dualist structures in the economy and strengthen

²⁵ The MDC Alliance was formed in 2017 as an electoral entity which united several opposition parties.

small enterprise production, the MDC government will provide the support and incentives for precarious informal enterprises to grow into substantive formal sector concerns' (Ibid., p. 36). In 2019, after the party congress, the MDC Alliance updated their Roadmap to Economic Recovery, Legitimacy, Openness and Democracy (RELOAD) which discussed a 'new course' for Zimbabwe. The informal sector, however, is not mentioned at all in this document (MDC Alliance, 2019).

Other opposition parties had a similar approach to the informal sector. For instance, Joice Mujuru former Vice-President and the leader of the National People's Party said it was necessary to get ordinary people, i.e. those in the informal sector, into the mainstream, and help families start businesses that can make them survive and contribute to the economic development. For her party, the final goals for the informal sector were formalisation and development of the manufacturing sector (Interview with Joice Mujuru, 7 May 2018).

The MDC-T saw formalisation of the economy through the re-opening of large industries as a major goal (Interview with Morgan Komichi, 27 April 2018). When asked if the MDC-T supported the informal sector and if they planned to do so in the future, Chairperson Morgan Komichi said: 'we need to support it [informal sector] as well. When we go out of the office, you see some girls selling our t-shirts, that's the support to the informal sector, to give them access to microfinance so that they could buy materials, sew it, and sell it.... [The programme for the informal sector is] in our policies. As the opposition party, we don't have resources to support them now'.

Overall, there has been a back-and-forth movement when the MDC-T emphasised the importance of the informal sector and the need to make it 'mainstream', i.e. formal, and then forgot about the existence of the sector and the immediate needs of people in this sector and focused on what, in their opinion, should be there instead of it. For instance, during the election campaign in 2018, Nelson Chamisa, the new leader of the MDC-T and MDC Alliance, presented his ideas of a future for Zimbabwe – a project dictated by high modernism. At MDC

Alliance rallies he spoke profoundly of building bullet trains, spaghetti roads, and village airports. The project was considered by some unrealistic and detached from reality due to its high modernist nature and attracted criticism, both internationally (for example, at the BBC HARDtalk show (*Nehanda Radio*, 2018) and locally, especially from pro-ZANU–PF forces. The *Herald*, for instance, criticised it heavily (Kahuni, 2018; Matorwa, 2018; Murwira, 2018a). In 2020, Chamisa reinforced his ideas again and posted a tweet: ‘I see Bullet trains, Spaghetti roads, Motorways, Skyscrapers, Best hospitals & Schools, Smart agriculture, New cities, New jobs & Wealth in this life. This, we will achieve in no time’ (Nelson Chamisa, 2020).

These modernist ideas may have sounded appealing, but they were disconnected from reality. The focus was on a long-term plan rather than a foreseeable future. In the meantime, MDC–T had the overwhelming majority of seats in Harare City Council. The Harare City Council formulates specific informal sector policies in Harare, and it has struggled with the informal sector since the early 2000s (Interview with Elias Mudzuri, 17 April 2018). Like the government, the local authorities divide the informal sector into ‘legal’ (registered with the Council, operating from the designated sites and paying rates and rents) and ‘illegal’ – informal sector activities which ‘do not conform with the local planning by-laws’ (Interview with Herbert Gomba, 10 April 2018). The Council established the Informal Sector Committee to tackle the problems of Harare’s informal sector (Interviews with Wilton Janjazi, 1 August 2016, and Charles Nyatsuro, 30 August 2016). The goal of the Council was to organise the informal sector by registering informal sector workers – in particular, vendors – relocating them to designated sites, and charging fees for access to market stalls and other facilities. One of the major concerns of the Council was street vending within the CBD, since ‘the standards are high, and the impact of the informal trade is more noticeable’ (Interview with Bernard Manyenyeni, 5 September 2016). The Council encouraged vendors to register with the City Council to assign them a slot at one of the 12 designated sites outside the CBD. Outside the CBD, the Council also created facilities for home industries to organise informal sector activities other than vending (Interview

with Wilton Janjazi, 1 August 2016). Cllr Sydney Chirombe (Interview, 11 April 2018) explained typical issues which councillors faced in townships: the local authorities were overwhelmed with the number of people they had to accommodate as ‘everyone [was] involved in selling’ (see Figures 4, 5 and 6 for examples of different types of vending facilities in townships) and by people abandoning formal marketplaces even where they were available to avoid paying the duties to the Council.



Figure 4. *Vendors operating individually from improvised backyard areas. Source: Kristina Pikovskaia (2016).*



Figure 5. *An improvised second-hand clothes and flea market in Mabvuku-Tafara. Source: Kristina Pikovskaia (2016).*



Figure 6. *A food market in Mabvuku–Tafara, one of more organised places for informal trade. Source: Kristina Pikovskaia (2016).*

Cllr Special Zuze, the Chair of the Informal Sector Committee of the City Council (Interview, 13 April 2018), indicated that in the CBD the problems were different, such as the lack of proper areas for the informal sector to operate from, law enforcement challenges and running battles between street vendors and the police, and the ‘critical’ shortage of space for the informal sector which stimulated the Council to look for sites outside the CBD. Cllr Fibion Kufahakutizvi (Interview, 9 April 2018) explained that vending had posed problems besides the obstruction of pavements. For instance, some informal sector activities, such as cooking meals or selling fish on the pavements, may create health hazards. According to him, many vendors refused to pay fees to the City Council and did not register with the local authorities on purpose. Because of the competition with street vendors, supermarkets cannot pay taxes and rates, he held. As he suggested, closer to elections vendors became ‘untouchable’ – they wore ZANU–PF party insignia or pretended to be political activists ‘to strike fear to [the Council’s] officials’.

He explained that when the Council's officials saw that the site or particular activities were politicised, they would leave to avoid confrontation. In addition, as MDC's Eddie Cross (Interview, 1 March 2018) indicated, the responsibilities of the local authorities increased, but their tax base diminished due to economic informalisation.

There have been problems with the Council's policies due to the partisan divide, unfeasibility of proposals, lack of funds, and political patronage. Firstly, the designated sites could not accommodate all vendors (Interview with Sten Zvorwadza, 30 August 2016). Secondly, they were usually situated away from the markets and were often inconvenient to access: 'vendors do not go where there are no people, and people do not look for where vendors are.... Relocating them does not make business sense for them – that is why they resist it' (Interview with Bernard Manyenyeni, 5 September 2016). For example, one of the designated sites was near Delta Beverage Coca-Cola Company along Seke Road (3.5 km away from the CBD) and was inconvenient for buyers and sellers (Interviews with Wilton Janjazi, 1 August 2016; Godfrey Kanyenze, 12 August 2016). There were also designated sites within the CBD that vendors found inconvenient: 'my stall was near the [commuter omnibus] rank, and no one buys there because people are in a hurry, and we moved out of the rank' (Interview with John, 1 September 2016). Other vendors registered with the Council and were allocated places at these sites but chose to leave them because there were no water and sanitation facilities: 'on these sites, there is no development there – how can we survive if there is no toilet, no water, how can people accept to buy at those places?' (Interview with Simbarashe, 23 April 2018). Thirdly, designated sites were frequently not equipped with the necessary facilities, such as market stalls and water and sanitation facilities, since the Council did not have sufficient financial resources, although the Council still committed to the development of these sites (Interview with Wilton Janjazi, 1 August 2016; with Peter Magada, 3 May 2018). Finally, some pro-ZANU–PF formations 'captured' urban spaces and established patronage networks (Interview with Danai, 2 May 2018). For example, the Copacabana market was one of few

designated sites in the CBD for the fruit and vegetable market. Vendors, who sold fruits and vegetables, registered with the Council and obtained market stalls at the Copacabana market (Interview with Kudakwashe, 1 September 2016). However, the pro-ZANU–PF Grassroots Empowerment Association captured the Copacabana market and gave stalls to its members who would sell clothes and other goods. They seemed to enjoy protection from the municipal police who did not relocate them (Interview with John, 1 September 2016). However, William Makananzi, the City of Harare Markets Operation Officer, suggested during my interview with him in 2018 (Interview, 2 May 2018) that after vendors complained about some organisations, like the Grassroots Empowerment Association, exploiting them and charging more than the legal Council fees for access to the designated sites, the Council has ‘since got rid of those [organisations]’.

Councillor Wilton Janjazi who had been the Head of the Informal Sector Committee argued that this environment was not conducive to positive change and effective implementation of the Council’s policies, and acknowledged the patronage problem (Interview with Wilton Janjazi, 1 August 2016). However, the Council’s attempts to reconcile the issues between partisan and non-partisan ISOs failed (Ibid.; see also Matenga, 2015c).

Another problem with the Council’s policy towards the informal sector is that it has been prone to internal conflicts. MDC–T have dominated the Council for two decades. The technocrats who work in various departments of the Council are supposed to be non-partisan. However, they have been caught between the MDC-dominated Council and the ZANU–PF-dominated Ministry of Local Government, which has made the implementation of policies difficult (Interview with Sten Zvorwadza, 30 August 2016). As Paul Muchena, the Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace national coordinator (Interview, 6 March 2018), suggested, ‘there is a disharmony between the local authorities and the government.... This has affected the informal sector: one day you are out [chased away], one day you are in [allowed to vend in the CBD]’. Also, there has been an issue of harassment by the municipal police officers many

of whom were hired before the MDC–T came to dominate the Council (Interview with Lloyd Sachikonye, 7 September 2016).

MDC–T’s National Executive Senator Lilian Timveas (Interview, 9 May 2018) heavily criticised both the government and local authorities. She argued that the Council was unwilling to change by-laws and make them favourable to the informal sector or engage the informal sector in discussions about potential interventions in the informal sector and by-laws. She also explained why, despite persistent economic informalisation, there was no national legal framework for the informal sector:

the issue is that there is no one who cares about the informals. The only thing they care about... Our country has politicised everything... So, they [ZANU–PF] don’t really make laws to empower people, they make laws to keep power. They make laws to make everyone poor, and then when it comes to elections, they give a kg of sugar, a kg of rice, a t-shirt, regalia (Ibid.).

As MDC–T’s Sesel Zvidzai, the GNU Deputy Minister of Local Government and Urban Development (Interview, 28 February 2018) explained, people started crowding the city in the mid-2000s: ‘these streets have never foreseen such situation’. Owing to frequent police raids, corruption, and the victimisation of vendors in the daytime, night-time vending emerged (post-2005, as economic informalisation continued growing alongside police harassment and government’s harmful interventions). It was safer for vendors to operate in the evening when the municipal police shift was over and when employees were leaving the CBD to go home and could buy vendors’ goods on their way to bus termini (Chirisa, 2007). Zvidzai noted that night-time vending could also contribute to crime rates. He explained that there was ‘paucity in planning’ due to the high volume of economic informalisation and limited resources. Also, people living off the informal sector rarely paid rates to local authorities for public services, which created health problems due to poor water quality and social issues (Interview with Sesel Zvidzai, 28 February 2018).

Indeed, city planners did not know how to change the urban space and whether it needed to be changed to accommodate the informal sector (Interview with Priscilla

Charumbira, 2 May 2018; with Phinneas Dohwe, 23 April 2018). Phinneas Dohwe, a city planner and president of the Zimbabwe Institute of Regional and Urban Planners (Interview, 23 April 2018), called the City Council the victim of economic informalisation and politics as the Council depended on the government and did not collect sufficient revenue. In his opinion, the only acceptable option for the local authorities regarding the informal sector was to give up because many planning interventions had negative results. Although there were many small changes in response to the situation, the major solution they saw was to wait until the economy improved, people left the informal sector, and the use of the urban space came back to how it was initially planned.

Overall, it seems that there have been two options regarding urban planning and legal framework for the informal sector. The first is to hold on to the modernity ideal and wait until the formal economy grows back and allows infrastructure to be fixed, service delivery, order, and cleanliness, and a return to the pre-crisis modern life. The second is to give up on the (early post-)colonial modernity ideal, admit that 'informal is the new normal' and adjust the use of the urban space and regulations so that they would not marginalise and criminalise the majority of the urban population, and thus re-visit the notion of modernity in line with the contemporary Zimbabwean context.

Despite the importance of the informal sector to its urban support base, the opposition was not attentive to its urgent needs because the modernist mindset persisted. The discussions about the informal sector focused exclusively on the need to re-create the 'modern' formal economy. The informal sector on its own received little attention. Many policies and approaches of the City Council were reasonable, but not feasible in practice, owing to the broader condition of the economy, poor infrastructure, and insufficient resources. Internal, partisan contradictions also impeded the Council's efforts. In the end, the MDC reproduced a modernist mentality disconnected from reality. This approach to the informal sector cast it as a temporary phenomenon that did not need or deserve significant attention from the authorities

as it would disappear once the MDC won the national elections and pursued neoliberal and modernising economic policies and attracted foreign investors. Such an approach did not help with the empowerment of informal sector actors as citizens. It implied that being in the informal sector was not good enough and modern enough and that the contribution of the informal sector to the economy was not meaningful enough.

§4. (DIS)CONNECTIONS OF PEOPLE IN THE INFORMAL SECTOR AND FORMAL POLITICS

Economic informalisation has affected people's relationship with the government and local authorities and stimulated other responses from people in addition to the well-established urban protest culture, which will be discussed in the next chapter. These included partial disengagement from the local authorities and government, the anticipation of the government re-industrialising the economy, even at the cost of immediate improvements in people's lives, and performing the authorities' functions, especially public service delivery. These particular responses may be explained by three factors: fatigue with politics (due to the lack of political change and history and practices of political violence), strong memory and/or imagination of what the modern state and modern city should be like, i.e. the public services provisions of the 1980s within a developed formal urban economy and lifestyle, and the repair of the physical manifestations of un-modernity – failed public service delivery. While overt resistance has been a common mechanism in the relationship between people and the political authorities, such responses cannot always be seen as a part of confrontational resistance but are nonetheless crucial to the understanding of practices and experiences of citizenship among individuals in the urban informal sector.

The academic literature has looked at responses of individuals in the informal sector to the local authorities and government. For example, Robert Magure (2015) looks at the impact of economic crisis and political contestation within the urban informal sector on individuals and argues that the poor in Zimbabwe were not passive victims of the economic crisis. He suggests

that their agency was expressed through their shift to informal economic activity. Also, he suggests that joining the informal sector was a strategy that people used to reclaim their right to the city, the space of which had turned into a site of political contestation. Francis Musoni (2010) studies the impact of Operation *Murambatsvina* on street vendors in Harare and argues that despite the extreme economic conditions and brutality they faced during the operation, they did not become apolitical. In the aftermath of *Murambatsvina* they emerged as ‘critical political thinkers’ (Ibid., p. 307). This may be seen in the broader context of informal sector actors changing their citizenship practices and revising and reclaiming their position and role within the political communities of the city and the state (see Bayat, 2004; Pieterse, 2008; Simone, 2004; also see a more detailed discussion in Chapter 7).

In Harare after 2000, people’s interactions and responses to the actions of the government and local authorities went well beyond confrontational resistance, and these activities were crucial for the transformation of lived citizenship after 2000. To begin with, many people disengaged from the state and political institutions, such as the government, MPs, party representatives, and local authorities, but maintained their aspirations for the return of the ‘welfarist’ state of the 1980s which took care of education, healthcare, infrastructure and, partly, housing into their lives. Informal sector actors and urban residents more broadly viewed most interventions by the government and local authorities as harmful. They felt that politicians abandoned them. Many did not believe that the councillors or parliamentarians listened to them or had any resources to help. This lack of faith in the local authorities and elected public representatives was an expression of broader frustration and discontent with party politics. When I interviewed members of different informal sector organisations in 2016 about their understanding of politics, many of them refrained from viewing politics as ‘party politics’ owing to the fear of political violence and their negative personal experiences of party politics. Stacey (Interview, 16 August 2016) who used to be an MDC activist said: ‘I am scared. I contested for parliamentary elections in 2008 and I had to leave home... I lost the position, but they [ZANU–

PF] haunted me... Later I opened a bar [in a township] and it was destroyed by ZANU people’. Hannah (Interview, 16 August 2016) had a similar experience: ‘I once was a politician in the MDC–T... When [Tendai] Biti and [Morgan] Tsvangirai [MDC leaders] parted, I left... ZANU–PF members, when they know you are an MDC supporter, want to destroy you... My family was not even accepted in society – they were isolated from so many things in society’. Like some others, Hannah later left the MDC for the fear of persecution.

Other people viewed politics mostly in terms of its impact on the economy and their individual businesses. Wellington who had an informal livelihood said: ‘it is the politics which is affecting the economy... There are some guys in the politics who are corrupt’. Glenda explained that for her, politics was ‘just knowing how the economy [was] going and everything like that’ (Interview with Glenda, 16 August 2016). During my 2018 fieldwork when I asked people more about what politics means to them and whether they are involved in politics, a common narrative people reproduced was ‘politics is a dirty game’, and it was better not to participate actively but only to vote in elections (Interview with Hope, 5 January 2018; with Tsitsi, 29 December 2017; with Alicia, 25 March 2018). Akmore Kori (Interview, 7 March 2018), the Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace outgoing national coordinator, suggested that economic informalisation had a negative impact on democratic participation. He noted that in 2017 people in the informal sector did not want to register to vote in the 2018 elections because they were afraid of losing their customers and, hence, losing an income.

There were, however, some active party supporters. For instance, Tania (Interview, 29 December 2017) supported the National People’s Party led by Joice Mujuru and campaigned for the party in her neighbourhood. She explained that she became an activist because people had suffered tremendously during Robert Mugabe’s rule: ‘I hope the Lord will hear our cry because we are like the children of Israel going through the desert for forty years. So, we are saying “enough is enough”’. While Tania expected her chosen political leader to bring change, other people lost hope in party politics. Nyasha (Interview, 29 December 2017) joined the MDC

in 2009 and was in the party's security structures. She also hoped that her participation in politics would help bring change, her major aspiration being formal employment. However, she said participation in politics did not change anything for her or the country, the only personal benefit being some money she received before the primaries. At the time of the interview, she was still in the party, as she explained, it became a habit for her. Tsitsi (Interview, 29 December 2017) also had experience in party politics. She said that around 2008 she went for a gathering of a ZANU–PF women's organisation, but she could not benefit: 'it was because of corruption – those people [who were in the party] would benefit. Life was really hard, and they were promising to give loans and teach skills, but it was just promises and lies'. She then became interested in the MDC around 2009 because she thought it could bring change. However, Tsitsi only registered to vote in 2018 after the resignation of President Mugabe – like many other people she thought the coup would open up political space and broaden the opportunities for change and she wanted to contribute to this process.

Overall, in 2018 during the transition period after the resignation of Robert Mugabe and before the general elections, people seemed to become more interested in politics and claimed that because Mugabe was no longer in office, they could speak freely (Interview with Hope, 5 January 2018). However, some people still refrained from discussing their political views as they were afraid of the potential consequences, views informed by the long history of extreme political violence in Zimbabwe (Interview with members of the Zimbabwe Union of Drivers and Conductors, 4 May 2018). While many respondents indicated that there were improvements in the attitudes of the government and local authorities toward the informal sector after the coup, for example, that they were not chased away from the CBD (Interview with Runako, 9 May 2018; with Herbert, 9 May 2018; with Brighton, 14 May 2018; with Vimbai, Chiedza, Tichaona and Israel Mabhoo, 20 April 2018), they were not sure if after the elections their attitude would not change to the worse again. As Brighton (Interview, 14 May

2018), an informal car-washer, suggested ‘when the elections [are over], they will chase us again’.

In the context of a broader discontent with the party politics, government and local authorities, people engaged in multiple forms of survival politics – small-scale, citizen-driven, non-governmental political action in which people engaged in self-help for reasons of survival and do not seek assistance or support from the authorities (Morris-Suzuki, 2013). In a situation of overwhelming economic informality, people engaged in survival politics by organising self-help groups and informal financial institutions which could help them grow their businesses. For instance, Hope (Interview, 5 January 2018), a vendor and cross-border trader, organised a self-help group for women in her community. The goal of this group was to compensate for the absence of accessible formal financial institutions that could issue vendors and cross-border traders with small short-term loans. She organised several women she knew, and they regularly contributed a small sum to a common fund which then would allow one of them to buy the goods to re-sell or distribute providing a basic economic empowerment method. There have also been multiple civil society and religious organisations which have promoted and facilitated similar methods of economic support and empowerment. A notable and well-established organisation in this sphere is the Self-Help Development Foundation (SHDF)²⁶ (formerly the Savings Development Movement) established in 1963 by a Catholic missionary to mobilise savings within small groups, particularly among rural women, although shifted from local small-group savings towards microcredit in 1996 (Raftopoulos and Lacoste, 2001, p. 3). The organisation has helped women develop micro and small enterprises through training and the establishment of informal financial institutions which is particularly pertinent in the economic informality context (Interview with Wadzanai Vere, 22 February 2018; SHDF, n.d.).

This engagement in self-help practices as a form of survival politics, to a large extent, derives from the belief that local authorities are either unwilling or unable to help people in the

²⁶ The organisation has 20,000 members, mostly in rural areas.

informal sector. In residential areas, local authorities have generally been more tolerant of unregistered informal economic activity and did not put pressure on informal sector actors who could operate freely (Interview with Stellah, 11 April 2018; with Lawrence and Rutendo, 12 April 2018). In some cases, for example, when people engaged in urban agriculture cultivating unoccupied Council land, some of them initiated discussions with the local authorities. For Instance, Joshua who engaged in urban agriculture among other informal economic activities said that as it was tied to the issues of ecology and because people ‘start taking urban agriculture very seriously’, it was essential to negotiate it with the local authorities (Interview, 30 April 2018). Still, such interactions are rather limited, and people generally resort to survival politics.

Second, people withheld their expectations of short-term improvements in their everyday lives, sacrificing them for the prospect of re-industrialisation and re-modernisation. In my interviews with people with informal sector livelihoods, very few mentioned that they wanted the government and local authorities to introduce immediate measures to support and improve work in the informal sector, for example, by formulating comprehensive legislation for the informal sector, providing social safety nets for informal sector workers, creating new designated sites for vending in or close to the city centre, or establishing more water and sanitation facilities. These proposals were mostly formulated by various civil society and informal sector organisations (of which not all informal sector actors are aware) rather than by individuals who earned a living in the informal sector. Common desires expressed by my respondents were for the police to stop harassing them and chasing them from the streets, due to their fatigue with the lack of improvements in the economy and politics, corruption, police brutality, and non-stop marginalisation of the informal sector. Above all, they wanted the government to revive the formal economy so that people could move from the informal sector back into formal employment. People’s vision of future development is that of high modernism and, as I argued in Chapter 3, the return to the industrialised economy, public services provision, and modern city associated with the 1980s and even the colonial period. The highly

modernist, and not entirely realistic in this dire economic situation, policies and plans of political parties appealed to this widespread desire. This once again signifies the detachment of aspirations from reality due to the domination of the modernist mindset. This compromise – the sacrifice of an immediate improvement in conditions from the government and political parties for a promise of a modern future – was a key characteristic of the relationship between people and political actors.

Third, people began to perform some functions of the government and local authorities, particularly in the sphere of public service delivery, thus broadening their citizenship practices and practising what I call ‘self-reliant citizenship’. The local authorities’ inability (or unwillingness) to deliver services in townships created a void. Lack of water supply was partially compensated by borehole water which was not always pure and safe to drink. To access borehole water, it is usually necessary to spend a long time in a queue, up to five hours (Human Rights Watch, 2013). It is especially hard for women who may get mugged or sexually harassed while waiting to get water from a borehole (*Zimbabwean*, 2012). Some people started fetching water from boreholes to people’s houses for a small fee, thus filling the water provision and water delivery void (see Figure 7). The deteriorating quality of roads, which started having multiple potholes, led to the local authorities dropping piles of rubble on sideroads apparently expecting people to fill potholes with that rubble. Hustlers saw it as a quick income-generating opportunity. Some people began patching roads with rubble and concrete and collecting small fees from motorists for their road repair services, therefore performing the local authorities’ duties in infrastructure maintenance. The *Chronicle* wrote in 2016: ‘our roads have witnessed some poor-boy jobs done by jobless and school dropouts to make the roads at least passable by filling rubble into potholes and expect payment from motorists. Their work does not seem to be a sustainable way of managing our roads’ (Sibanda, 2016). Although unsustainable, it is a short-term solution for individuals who seek to make a living, motorists who do not need to manoeuvre to avoid potholes, and local authorities who cannot maintain infrastructure properly.



Figure 7. *People queuing for borehole water in Mbare. Source: Kristina Pikovskaia (2016).*

These activities are considered extremely precarious, and in the relative respectability hierarchy of informal economic activities, there are very close to the bottom. Some people believed that it was only destitute people with alcohol and drug addiction who took up such duties (Interview with Munya, 27 March 2018). They were very poorly and inconsistently paid, and no one would engage in such activities by choice. My informant Freeman (Interview, 30 April 2018) was a young man who earned a living from fetching water. He used to be addicted to drugs, but then he joined a church, and this community helped him quit his addiction. He aspired to be an artist and spent much time creating artwork. However, he could not generate sufficient income to make ends meet from selling artwork alone, and he started collecting water from boreholes and bringing it to people's houses for a small fee, as little as fifty cents per bucket. He did not think highly of this economic activity. He felt that he was looked down upon in the community, that there was competition in this sphere, and that it was very precarious and unsustainable as a livelihood. He did not feel that he was contributing to his community or

performing the local authorities' functions. For him, water fetching was a temporary activity that would let him get by and focus on his artwork.

Vince (Interview, 11 April 2018) mostly made a living from patching potholes and collecting money from motorists for his services. He had been doing it for several years and, as he claimed, for a while, this activity allowed him to make ends meet. He said that a few years ago, around 2013, he could generate up to fifty dollars on a good day, but at the time of the interview, he would only make around five dollars. Vince explained that back then the economic situation was better than in 2018, and motorists often had some money to spare and often stopped to pay him for filling potholes with rubble and pieces of concrete, thus making roads better. Unlike Freeman, Vince said that he did it because he wanted to help his community and fix the roads, and he was upset that he could not afford suitable materials, such as cement, to fix the roads better.

During my fieldwork, I was also told a story about a soldier who informally provided healthcare services in his township. Unfortunately, I was not able to interview him as people whom I asked to connect me with him thought it was not possible as he was in the army, but several people told me about him. Since healthcare in Zimbabwe is expensive and many people cannot afford it, there are informal healthcare providers whose services are more affordable. People who told me about this person spoke highly of him. Compared to those individuals with informal livelihoods who fetched water or patched potholes, his informal activity was considered respectable, and he was considered to be performing an important role in helping his community.

It would seem that the local authorities that claim that they do not have enough resources to ensure public service delivery would benefit from citizens performing their functions. However, it was not the case. Funny Machipisa (Interview, 2 May 2018), the City of Harare Districts Administration Manager, clarified the position of the Council with regards to activities, like patching potholes:

those are illegal activities, and we've put measures to have these people arrested, but you know, with the economy at this stance, we can't control each and every situation, you just at the end of the day you just try to relax and leave the situation as it is... The fact that we don't have money doesn't mean that we have to give up our mandate... they are not people whom we engage and legalise, they remain individuals who do these activities for their own benefit and not linked to the Council.

Regardless of how informal economic activities and citizens' activities in general that fill the service delivery void left by the local authorities and government were perceived in communities and by local authorities, it is undeniable that some of the most marginalised people took up the functions which the local authorities and the government no longer performed and that they, at a small scale, improved people's environment in the situation of an extreme crisis and an almost complete collapse of infrastructure. The emergence of such activities also informed the political dynamics between individuals and political institutions and citizenship in Zimbabwe: people did not rely on the state to bring any improvements to their lives in the near future and used the inability of the government and local authorities to deliver in order to generate a small income. Even though some people saw these activities as useless and not respectable, people became active citizens by identifying the gaps in the social service delivery sphere and fulfilling the duties of the City Council and contributing to their communities.

These activities may be seen with a reference to 'hydraulic citizenship' (Anand, 2017). Nikhil Anand (Ibid.) uses this concept to discuss a negotiated and exclusive relationship of different social groups to water provision by the state. In the case of Harare, the state provision of safe drinking water is very limited, and 'hydraulic citizenship' spills over into the non-state domain where water provision is partly performed by organisations that provide boreholes and water delivery is performed by individuals. This lived citizenship practice is characteristic of the relationship between local authorities which cannot provide public services and residents and adds a new dimension to the experiences of citizenship in the context of the broader economic and political crisis. While Nikhil Anand discusses relationships between various institutions and social groups in the context of water delivery, it can be extended to other public services as well.

In Harare, the failures of the local authorities and government to provide and maintain public services (water and sanitation, infrastructure, or healthcare) at a socially acceptable level resulted in the involvement of other actors, such as organisations and, as seen from the examples above, individuals from the informal sector who were ready to fill this void and, in a sense, prevent the complete disappearance of the promise of modernity closer to fulfilment.

This view is distinct from the substantive citizenship discussed by Simukai Chigudu (2017), which is measured by people's ability to access public services. This kind of lived citizenship practices and experiences may be defined as a form of self-reliant citizenship: although they maintain expectations for service delivery and broader economic and political improvements and recognition and delivery of their human and civil rights, people no longer rely on the authorities to grant them those on the basis of their citizenship status due to prolonged deprivation. Instead, they engage in various self-help strategies to assist themselves and their communities (families, neighbourhoods, church groups and other social entities) with gaining rights and access to public services which should have been provided by state institutions.

In sum, because of the economic crisis and lack of capacity or will of the local authorities and the government to bring about positive changes to the economy and infrastructure, people, to no small extent, disengaged from the authorities and diverted their attention to self-help methods of survival politics. At the same time, they hoped for the government to restore the economy and make it 'modern', as it was imagined to have been in the 1980s. People did not expect any significant improvements in the informal sector as they saw the informal sector as not belonging to the 'modern' economy. In the meantime, they took up some functions of the authorities, including in public service delivery and healthcare to fill in the void, and even though such informal economic activities were not considered important or respectable, they broadened practices of lived citizenship by creating ways for individuals to contribute to their communities where the authorities had failed.

§5. NON-NEOLIBERAL RESILIENCE OR ADAPTIVE RESISTANCE AS A TEMPORARY
SURVIVAL MECHANISM IN THE INFORMAL SECTOR

As shown in Chapter 2, neoliberal reforms in Zimbabwe, the collapse of the previously highly functional and industrialised economic system, political authoritarianism, and political violence exposed people to numerous and persistent economic, financial, and political shocks. Individuals had to adapt to these shocks, and they have continued to do so with varying success. It has been argued that resilience has emerged as a crucial trait that allows people to withstand hazards with which the government and local authorities present them (Moyo, 2018). I suggest that it is more correct to speak of adaptive resistance rather than neoliberal resilience in the Zimbabwean context. Not only does adaptive resistance allow people to survive in an economic system that has changed beyond recognition, but it has also become a crucial feature for living and challenging the approaches of the government and local authorities and succeeding in the economic and political communities of Harare and Zimbabwe.

The term ‘resilience’ came to the social sciences from the 1970s systems ecology where it referred to a capacity of ecosystems to adapt to crises, hazards, and unfavourable conditions that threaten their survival (Walker and Cooper, 2011). Social resilience is the ability of social groups or individuals to withstand external stresses, i.e. disruption of livelihoods and forced adaptation to changing social, economic, political, and environmental circumstances (Adger, 2000; Berkes, Colding and Folke, 2003). Jonathan Joseph (2013) suggests that resilience is a form of neoliberal governmentality which stimulates people to be self-reliant and entrepreneurial, and resilience ‘encourages the idea of active citizenship, whereby people, rather than relying on the state, take responsibility for their own social and economic well-being’ (Joseph, 2013, p. 42). Essentially, neoliberal resilience builds the notion that individuals are unable to change the world. The argument is that, although one cannot change the world, s/he can successfully adapt to it to survive better. As Brad Evans and Julian Reid (2013, p. 85) argue,

a resilient subject is ‘not a subject which can conceive of changing the world, its structure and conditions of possibility’. The neoliberal state uses resilience as a tool for governance from a distance to stimulate acceptable adaptive behaviours among its subjects through the use of powers instead of giving power to people and civil society (Joseph, 2013).

At the intersection of extreme economic informalisation and political authoritarianism in Zimbabwe, it is argued that resilience becomes a trait crucial for individual survival and can be viewed as a set of practices of self-reliant citizenship primarily aimed at survival. This quality is known as ‘being streetwise’, ‘knowing your ways’, or ‘adapting’ and implies a person’s ability to shift from the formal to the informal economic sector rapidly, remain flexible in one’s specialisation, stay mobile, and understand the political space. People in the informal sector have largely become self-reliant which suggests that the scope of citizenship of individuals with informal sector livelihoods has shrunk as their meaningful interactions with the government and local authorities have become more limited. Resilience, therefore, has become a crucial characteristic of this citizenship which allows people to exist in this political community of Zimbabwe in general and Harare specifically.

This resilience is, however, not quite neoliberal resilience. As I have suggested above and in Chapter 3, people in the informal sector did not part with the state entirely although they saw it and the city authorities as unhelpful or damaging. They nonetheless sustained an expectation that the government would kickstart the economy, bring positive economic and political changes, and take care of citizens. This is similar to Simukai Chigudu’s (2017) argument about the resilience of Harare residents in the face of the 2008 cholera outbreak. He argues that it was not a pure neoliberal resilience and that people did not conceive of their life after the humanitarian crisis in post-political terms in which individuals’ only concern is with survival and their only tool is self-organisation. I also suggest that although resilience has become an essential characteristic for individuals with informal sector livelihoods to possess due to severe economic conditions and damaging interventions (or, in contrast, inaction) by the

government and local authorities, people have not completely abandoned politics (as demonstrated by mass protest movements in 2016–2017, discussed in Chapter 5, and expectations for political change after the 2017 coup) and have not excluded the state and local authorities from their expectations. As demonstrated above, people still anticipated the productive and beneficial return of state institutions and local authorities in their lives, although at that stage they did not see them as committed or their interventions as productive. This resilience is also not used by the state as neoliberal governmentality, and nor does the state see many of its manifestations as socially acceptable or desirable. As we have seen earlier in this Chapter, major political actors and state institutions have not facilitated resilience but, in contrast, have created obstacles for the informal sector. While neoliberal resilience is about ‘individual responsibility’ (Joseph, 2013), resilience in Harare’s urban informal sector is about individual survival and a fight for a livelihood in face of severe economic decline, frequently harmful interventions of the government and local authorities, and often tough and violent political contestation. It should, therefore, be seen not as a manifestation of neoliberalism, but as a strategy for survival in a highly complicated economic and political environment.

The term ‘adaptive resistance’ is better suited for describing people’s adaptive responses to the grave economic and political conditions in the informal sector than is ‘resilience’. Francis Musoni (2010) used it to describe responses to the destructive effects of Operation *Murambatsvina*, which presented an alternative to more common confrontational resistance. He notes that although some informal traders did not manage to adapt to the devastating consequences of *Murambatsvina*, such as losing their housing and livelihoods, others resorted to subtle forms of non-confrontational resistance and reinvented themselves and their livelihoods in the aftermath of *Murambatsvina*. He suggests that informal traders’ survival and revival after *Murambatsvina* depended on their adaptive resistance expressed through various skills and abilities to ‘dodge the system’, such as performing a ‘hide-and-seek’ strategy with the police (Ibid., p. 314). Musoni notes that these various subtle forms of resistance ‘relied heavily on the financial status of specific

individuals and/or households, as well as on gender, familial, kinship and other social networks, and the ability to manipulate and/or connive with a range of state officials, especially the police' (Ibid., p. 317). Adaptive resistance was overall more successful in protecting informal sector actors from intrusions by the government and was far less dangerous and risky than more common confrontational resistance, e.g. protests, demonstrations, and open confrontation with government forces (Ibid.).

The concept of 'adaptive resistance' consists of two parts. The 'adaptation' part of the concept is expressed in the ability of informal sector actors to estimate complex situations that they face in informal sector activities and use personal characteristics and networks to avoid adverse consequences. The 'resistance' part is expressed in people's refusal to comply with policies and interventions of the government and local authorities which are harmful to their livelihoods. In the case of adaptive resistance, this refusal is not openly demonstrated, e.g. via protests, but is covert (Musoni, 2010). For instance, if vendors are evicted from the CBD and are not allowed to vend there, or if their wares are confiscated by the police, they still return to the CBD as it is a part of their resistance and survival strategy, but they adapt to potential adverse consequences by, for example, hiding their wares using their personal networks. Adaptive resistance, therefore, is a subtle kind of resistance which considers not only the need to resist state interventions but also the complex economic and political situation and potential consequences.

The importance of adaptive resistance in the urban informal sector has been explored in popular culture, such as in Zimdancehall songs. In the song *Robots*, Winky D, a major Zimbabwean dancehall artist, compares young people who have to make a living out of the urban informal sector to robots who always have to be on the alert to see opportunities for eking out a living. He condemns 'idleness' and 'laziness' and claims that only those may survive who have robot-like skills and never rest. He compares youths in the informal sector hustling with no rest with 'them', i.e. with people who stigmatise them and explains that they do not

understand their life because it is those youths who had to learn how to survive in the streets from childhood, to always be alert, to never rest, and to search for opportunities to generate income everywhere.

Another Winky D song, a duet with Shinsoman, *Survivor*, addresses the youth in the informal sector as ‘survivors’. It dwells on the harassment and challenges informal sector actors face. The artists suggest that despite all these hardships, they remain resourceful and resilient. They explain that there are a lot of gifted young people in townships who struggle to earn a living, but there are limited opportunities and a lot of obstacles presented by the police and the City Council. They compare urban youths with MacGyver²⁷ to explain how resourceful they are in tough conditions.

I suggest that adaptive resistance in the informal sector in Zimbabwe has several dimensions: economic specialisation (vending, hawking, cross-border trade, service provision, or home industries), politics of informal spaces (markets, streets, or settlements), space (city centre, townships, or cross-border), gender, and age. Some of these characteristics were indicated by Francis Musoni (2010) and mentioned above (kinship networks, ability to negotiate with the police, and gender). I suggest that there are other characteristics of an individual and her/his livelihood which positively or negatively affects her/his adaptive resistance. For instance, economic specialisation as a dimension of adaptive resistance in the informal sector refers to an individual’s ability to diversify her/his economic activities and prioritise some activities over others depending on the season, economic situation, and demands of the market.

Politics is an important dimension of adaptive resistance as informal markets, streets, and informal settlements are often under the control of political forces, especially ZANU–PF, which has managed to develop vast patronage networks via militia groups and pro-party organisations. Although patronage in urban areas has not been as strong as in rural areas, it has

²⁷ A reference to a popular US 1985 and 2016 TV series MacGyver in which the protagonist is a highly talented and skilled problem-solver.

significantly affected people's economic activities through the obligations to buy party tickets and attend the party's rallies or threats of banishment from vending sites or accommodation and political violence (Kriger, 2012; McGregor, 2013; McGregor and Chatiza, 2019, 2020). Musoni (2010) also stresses that relationships with state officials as well as the ability to read the political mood of local authorities and government may be crucial for adaptive resistance in the informal sector. He uses the case of Makomva business centre where people adopted confrontational resistance in response to demolitions carried out by local authorities and were supported by the government in their protest. However, they shifted to adaptive resistance in 2005 as now it was the government that ordered demolitions (Ibid., p. 313). The ability to understand the moods of 'big' political players proved crucial in their choice of resistance strategies and in their survival.

The spatial dimension of adaptive resistance in the informal sector matters because informal economic activities occur in physical spaces, e.g. markets, streets, people's homes, or across the border. While some people use online platforms, such as *WhatsApp*, *Twitter*, or *Facebook*, to conduct their informal businesses, many people carry out their businesses in physical spaces in which local and national politicians exercise influence. As I demonstrate below, the ability to access, use, and adapt to these physical spaces has become crucial for people in the informal sector.

Gender is another important factor for adaptive resistance in the informal sector. With relation to adaptive resistance post-*Murambatsvina*, Francis Musoni (2010) notes that in the aftermath of these events many men sent their families to rural areas, and consequently largely male-dominated businesses survived. Women-dominated businesses, e.g. hair salons, catering and computer-based services, predominantly required shelter which was challenging to get after *Murambatsvina*, and as a result, many women turned to more precarious livelihoods, such as street vending. Jeremy Jones (2010) argues that the informal economy in Zimbabwe has been a women-dominated area as women resorted to informal economic activities in urban areas to

supplement their husbands' formal income. However, once the crisis in Zimbabwe started in the late 1990s, the formal economy shrank, and the informal sector exponentially broadened, more men became involved in informal economic activities. Still, many people conceive of the informal sector as feminine since it has historically been so and they have seen their mothers engaging in vending and cross-border trade since they were little or their wives doing so (Interview with Lisa, 23 March 2018; with Peter and Mike, 14 April 2018). Besides shifting gender composition and dynamics in the informal sector, women face severe problems when they operate informally, including abuse and sexual harassment. Also, since it is women who typically take care of children and most cannot afford childcare, they have to take their children with them, exposing them to potential dangers. For instance, a female vendor recalled how her baby was almost run over by a municipal police truck when she was fleeing the police (*DailyNews*, 2017). These are some of the most severe issues women in the informal sector have to deal with besides the absence of or limited access to water and sanitation facilities, difficulties with nursing babies, and maintaining their babies' and children's hygiene and physical safety (on women and children in vending, see *DailyNews*, 2017; *Herald*, 2012a).

Finally, age may also shape an individual's adaptive resistance to informal sector challenges. Younger people in the informal sector may face more significant challenges since, as they say, they may be viewed as drug sellers, prostitutes, and drunkards. At the same time, they adapt to informality more efficiently as opposed to the older generation, especially those with a long record of formal employment. Lisa (Interview, 23 March 2018), a young woman who aspired to obtain a formal job but in 2018 was running an informal bakery, shared her family experience. Her mother always did informal economic activities, and she had helped her since she was little. Her father had had a formal job for a long time, but when he was retrenched, he attempted to vend informally and failed because he did not have the necessary social skills to do it as he had never had to make a livelihood outside formal employment.

These five dimensions of adaptive resistance interact, and when individuals develop the understanding of their strong and weak points and learn to overcome informal sector challenges, their overall adaptive resistance in the violative informal sector improves dramatically and ensures their survival in the harsh economic situation. Sophie (Interview, 10 March 2018), a senior female informal service provider and cross-border trader, insisted that the essential quality in Zimbabwe's informal economy was 'being streetwise' by which she meant knowing her ways of making deals, negotiating, and estimating the urban space and economic situation. This is an expression of what Jeremy Jones calls *kukiya-kiya* – 'cleverness, dodging, and the exploitation of whatever resources are at hand, all with an eye to self-sustenance' (Jones, 2010, p. 286). Sophie was part-time formally employed as a masseuse and using her skills she had managed to acquire clients who hired her informally. That allowed her to increase her income significantly without sharing profits with the salon. Sophie claimed that during the harsher times of crisis, when certain commodities were not available in Zimbabwe, she was invaluable to her upper-class friends and clients through engaging in cross-border trade at which she managed to succeed without any previous experience or even having a passport. Her age was also an asset in cross-border trade: she suggested that since she was middle-aged at that time, cross-border trade was more straightforward for her as younger women faced sexual harassment and different forms of stigmatisation, for example, as prostitutes and drug smugglers, when they engaged in cross-border trade. Sophie had protected some younger women when they were crossing the border. She brought some commodities that were in short supply in Zimbabwe from abroad and sold them to her better-off friends and clients who otherwise could not access those goods. Her informal economic activities allowed her not only to provide for herself but also to support her children and even build two houses for herself and her children. She credited the support of her friends but largely attributed her success in the informal economy to her hard work, ability to be 'streetwise', and use her social networks to earn a living. In Sophie's narrative about her navigation of the informal sector, adaptive resistance presented itself in several dimensions. She managed to use her gender, age, and specialisation to her advantage. She

diversified her occupation by engaging in cross-border trade. She navigated the physical space expertly by succeeding in cross-border trade and providing her services in the urban areas by using the existing network of her clients to find new ones. The political dimension of adaptive resistance was not relevant to Sophie as her occupation was not tied to a particular politicised location, and she also avoided getting involved in politics surrounding cross-border trade.

Informal sector actors who operate in politicised environments may demonstrate a political dimension of adaptive resistance. Tara (Interview, 21 February 2018), a young woman respondent, used to sell second-hand clothes at a ZANU–PF controlled market. She managed to obtain a stall at the market through a friend who also worked there, not through partisan structures. Despite the ZANU–PF control of that market, Tara avoided becoming a party member not because she supported the opposition and it was her principled position but because she was not interested in partisan politics at all. She also avoided going to ZANU–PF rallies because she did not support the party and managed to negotiate this issue with the militia who controlled the market. Her ability to penetrate the politicised economic space through her social connections and negotiation allowed her to make a living without sacrificing her identity as a person not interested in politics.

The fact that under the current economic and financial conditions people in Zimbabwe have had to adopt adaptive resistance means that the state is virtually absent from (or at the very maximum loosely present in) the economic system. The state has not ensured financial stability, formalisation of the economy, regulation of informal economic activities, social welfare, or redistribution of wealth, to name a few areas to which it could potentially contribute. As the previously functional industrialised economic system collapsed, the state has been unwilling to provide social welfare for its citizens or address the current challenges that people in the informal sector have to deal with daily. It has also not been capable of pursuing modernising development to fulfil people’s modernist expectations.

To conclude, adaptive resistance in the informal sector has several dimensions – economic, political, spatial, gender, and age. In Zimbabwe, the state and the city (the government and local authorities as well as the urban space and infrastructure) have become threatening and harmful to livelihoods, and people have had to develop adaptive resistance to survive and make a living. A situation has emerged with the government and local authorities seeing an individual as a citizen and, in line with the modernist viewpoint, expecting her/him to behave in a specific manner regarding her/his occupation, contribution to the national economy and treasury, political activity, and occupation of space. However, the government has no way of producing it due to the profound collapse of the modern economic system and the informal sector growth. The economic, political, and spatial dimensions of adaptive resistance in the informal sector have contributed to the ideas and practices of self-reliant citizenship as the main form of lived citizenship since they are linked to the norms of the political community of the country and the city. The old vision of modernisation under which the state ensures the availability of formal employment in industries has collapsed. Adaptive resistance has become a crucial feature for an individual to possess to be a part of this political community and to survive in this economic and political system. This specific type of resilience, which is different from both neoliberal resilience and confrontational resistance, means that people in the informal sector do not abandon politics and the state domain – some participate in elections, others in protest movements, but all anticipate and hope for the state (the government and local authorities) to kickstart the economy and restore social service delivery as in the 1980s.

§6. CONCLUSION

None of Zimbabwe's political parties was ready for the rapid and overwhelming economic informalisation that hit the country from the late 1990s. However, ZANU–PF was more successful in adapting to the rapidly changing economic environment, mostly by developing patronage networks in the informal sector. The government took steps to support

informal businesses, although some of these measures failed due to corruption and political patronage. The main philosophy of the ruling party was to create self-reliant citizens who could support themselves without counting on the government. While this stemmed from the neoliberal ESAP, it was done under the broader auspices of indigenisation and nationalism which were meant to economically empower black Zimbabweans, albeit unsuccessfully in urban areas. In the end, indigenisation led to the expansion of the informal sector instead of creating indigenous employers (Interview with Earnest Mudzengi, 22 January 2018), and the informal sector prevailed over the SME sector development (Interview with Farai Mutambanengwe, 10 May 2018).

The political opposition faced significant challenges as the MDC, the main opposition party, primarily used trade unions for political mobilisation. Once massive retrenchments started in the late 1990s and early 2000s, the MDC faced mobilisation challenges. At the same time, from around 2008, after the demise of the ZCTU, the MDC-T promoted a neoliberal programme and emphasised the paradigm of high modernism in their political programmes and policies. The informal sector is barely present in their programmes and manifestos. Though it dominated the City Council, the MDC-T offered little in terms of improving the conditions in the informal sector, which partly had to do with limited resources and the interference of the Ministry of Local Government, and also were grounded in the commitment to a modernising vision to which the informal sector did not belong.

People have been frustrated with this lack of progress and improvement in the economy. Besides the established protest practice, they developed other responses. For instance, many people disengaged from the government and local authorities and expressed their frustration with party politics in general. They engaged in a range of non-governmental forms of politics, organising with other people in the informal sector to help and empower one another. At the same time, people aspired for the productive and beneficial return of the government and local authorities into their lives, first and foremost, in the form of economic improvements. People

also emphasised long-term expectations of broad economic improvements and did not give attention to potential short-term improvements in the informal sector, a stance which seemed to fit the narratives of political parties which also focused on the distant and ‘modern’ future rather than the present. In the meantime, people started performing the duties of the government and local authorities, especially in public service delivery. Although people did not consider these activities ‘decent’, people who performed them made a significant contribution to their communities.

As a response to the ambivalent approach of the political parties to the informal sector, predominantly shaped by ideas of urban modernity in which there was no place for the informal sector, people had to adapt to the severe economic and political conditions. Many people did this by developing adaptive resistance which became a major mechanism for survival and success in the informal sector. In the context of Harare’s informal sector, this meant being able to shift from the formal economic domain to the informal, change specialisations rapidly in response to changing conditions, navigate the political space, and be mobile. Adaptive resistance acquired several dimensions which interacted as people engaged in informal economic activities, such as economic specialisation, space, politics, gender, and age. Developing adaptive resistance in these dimensions allowed people to withstand harsh conditions and harmful intervention by the government and local authorities. In cases where confrontational resistance did not achieve the necessary results, adaptation allowed people to survive and earn a living in the informal sector.

This arrangement between ‘big’ political actors (parties, the government, and local authorities) and people in the informal sector shaped the grassroots understanding of citizenship, which will be further explored below. The temporary disengagement from the state and aspiration for the productive return of the government and local authorities in people’s lives shapes the attitudes of people towards ideas about citizenship that have been perpetuated by the government and local authorities for decades.

Another core actor in the citizenship field in urban Zimbabwe has been civil society – the labour movement, NGOs, religious organisations and most recently, popular protest movements – all these actors have been in continuous dialogue with urban residents, government, local authorities, and parties, and have had a profound impact on the ideas about citizenship in urban Zimbabwe, as explored in the following Chapter.

CHAPTER 5.

CIVIL SOCIETY AND POPULAR PROTEST MOVEMENTS FACING ECONOMIC

INFORMALISATION

§1. INTRODUCTION

Political parties, the government, and local authorities have not been the only actors who had to adapt to economic informalisation and address the issues of the informal sector. Civil society was also strongly affected by the socio-economic as well as political processes in the country. This Chapter looks at the developments in civil society and popular protest movements post-2000 and explores how trade unions, non-governmental organisations (NGOs) (rights-oriented and activist organisations and groups in Zimbabwe are also referred to as ‘civics’), religious organisations, and protest movements adapted to economic informalisation and engaged with the informal sector.

The civil society is an umbrella category for various organisations and may be broadly defined as ‘a complex and dynamic ensemble of legally protected nongovernmental institutions that tend to be nonviolent, self-organizing, self-reflexive, and permanently in tension, both with each other and with the governmental institutions that “frame”, constrict and enable their activities’ (Keane, 2010). I view popular protest (or hashtag) movements which started emerging in Zimbabwe in 2014–2017 as an extension rather than an integral part of civil society since they operated outside civil society institutions, although not via un-civil means (Helliker and Murisa, 2020, p. 7). It is also important to note that in the course of economic informalisation, a new segment of the civil society emerged that was represented by informal sector organisations. These are explored separately in Chapter 6 as they are novel actors for Zimbabwe which came to play a particular role in relation to people’s vision and practices of citizenship.

The Chapter argues that all the civil society was negatively affected by informalisation as it changed their support base and programmes and the broader political context, including the rise of political oppression, their exclusion from power-sharing negotiations in 2008, and a decline in donor funding. Their direct engagement with the informal sector was limited either because it was outside their domain or because organisations had limited capacities. At the same time, protest movements took an instrumental attitude to the informal sector and attempted to use it to achieve their own goals. I suggest that some established civil society actors (trade unions and civics) shaped collectivity-based and rights-based notions of citizenship which were later employed in the informal sector (see Chapter 6). At the same time, some civil society actors – NGOs, churches and religious organisations shifted their activities towards economic empowerment and training due to vast economic informalisation which facilitated their members' adaptation skills and self-sufficient citizenship discussed in Chapter 4. However, the approaches of civil society actors and protest movements were still underpinned by the notions of urban modernity. Overall, the response of the civil society to economic informalisation was more varied and diverse than that of the political parties explored above and laid the foundation for the emergence and activity of a segment of civil society which specifically addressed the needs and interests of informal sector actors which are explored in detail in Chapter 6.

The Chapter engages with a range of literature on the development of the labour movement in Zimbabwe in the aftermath of the Economic Structural Adjustment Programme (ESAP) in the late 1990s and its attitude to the informal sector; it discusses the role of civil society actors in the informal sector in developing countries and developments in the Zimbabwean civil society in the course of economic informalisation and growing political contestation in urban areas. Finally, it refers to the literature on popular protest movements, insurgent citizenship, and 'political society' uprising in African countries and specifically in Zimbabwe. This literature, although it does not always speak directly to the relationship between civil society and the informal sector, informs the understanding of this relationship.

The primary sources for this Chapter are interviews with a range of actors: representatives of the labour movement, leaders and officials from NGOs, churches and religious organisations, activists, and leaders of popular protest movements. In-depth interviews with these respondents allow us to see the nature of the relationship of civil society actors with the urban informal sector and to evaluate the impact of economic informalisation on these actors.

§2. ECONOMIC INFORMALISATION AND THE LABOUR MOVEMENT CRISIS

Trade unions in Zimbabwe played an important role in politics in the 1990s and early 2000s. However, due to the shrinkage of their membership base, their impact decreased. They did not include informal sector actors into the Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions (ZCTU) institutions as they did not recognise them as ‘workers’. Nevertheless, the ZCTU stood for the rights of informal sector actors and facilitated the establishment of the Zimbabwe Chamber of Informal Economy Associations (ZCIEA). The ZCTU also contributed to a formation of a particular notion of citizenship based on collectivity as worker identity and broad membership base were central to its success. This notion of citizenship later partly transferred into the informal sector as it will be discussed later in Chapter 6.

The labour movement played a vital role in democratisation in Zimbabwe in the 1990s. Despite being closely politically linked to the ruling Zimbabwe African National Union–Patriotic Front (ZANU–PF) from 1981, the ZCTU, which was the major trade union umbrella organisation at the time, grew increasingly critical of the party in the 1990s, firstly, because of its pursuit of neoliberal economic policies, largely in the form of ESAP, and secondly, because of growing authoritarianism. Having massive membership (around 200,000) and extensive mobilisation and organisation capacities, the ZCTU became a major force in the civic life of urban Zimbabwe. With other civil society allies, it came to form the major opposition party, the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC), in 1999 (Raftopoulos, 2001; Bond, 2001). The

trade union influence on politics in urban Zimbabwe, especially with regard to mobilisation and organisation of workers as voters for the MDC, played an important part in democratisation in the country and diversification of the political space.

ESAP was also one of the key issues which strengthened the ZCTU's departure from the ZANU–PF government. Japhet Moyo (Interview, 22 January 2018), the ZCTU Secretary-General, explained that the labour movement objected to the ESAP and a one-party state philosophy and drifted away from the ZANU–PF. As he argued, the Zimbabwean economy was not ready for the neoliberal reforms proposed by the World Bank and International Monetary Fund which would impoverish Zimbabweans: 'we had agreed with ZANU and [the Zimbabwean African People's Union] that we [were] a socialist state.... The government is saying "left" whilst going "right"'. The ZCTU proposed a policy alternative to ESAP in *Beyond the ESAP* which Japhet Moyo called the 'ground-breaking programme', the cornerstone of which was equal land distribution. The government, however, declined it. As Moyo suggests, the government adopted the 'ostrich approach' when it denied the scale of economic problems caused by ESAP (Interview with Japhet Moyo, 22 January 2018).

As Brian Raftopoulos (2009, pp. 225–226) indicates, the ZCTU decline became prominent since 2000, and there were several reasons that contributed to it, such as state repression, formal economy's (and consequently, employment) shrinkage, a decline in trade union membership (12% of the labour force in 2000 against 16% in 1990 [Kanyenze and Chiripanhura cited in Raftopoulos, 2009, p. 225]), ZANU–PF sabotage tactics of creating splinter labour unions in nine major economic sectors (ZCTU cited in Raftopoulos, 2009, p. 225), and general informalisation of the economy and shift to *kukiya-kiya* where 'normal rules' (to use Jones' [2010] terminology) and, as a result, classic organisation and mobilisation methods do not work anymore.

There are other explanations for the decline of the political force of the ZCTU. For instance, Qinisani Bhebhe and Mildred Mahapa (2014) suggest that globalisation, factionalism

within the Congress, the rise of the MDC which soon started advocating for neoliberal economic reforms and economic sanctions detrimental to workers, and the formation of the rival pro-ZANU–PF labour organisation²⁸ – all account for the decay of the ZCTU. Paris Yeros (2013) argues that the reasons causing the decline were structural weaknesses of the ZCTU itself, its growing dependence on donor funding, and the reduction of the understanding of democratisation to regime change. The Government of National Unity (GNU) presented new blows to the labour movement. The MDC was expected to ‘carry the working people’s agenda’, but that idea became debatable during the GNU, and a lot of workers no longer believed that their political allies stood for their rights (Interview with Japhet Moyo, 22 January 2018). Protracted and delayed democratisation in Zimbabwe coupled with the worsening economy and shrinking formal sector tested the capacities of the labour movement to survive the struggle for social justice and democratisation let alone to advance it (Hadebe, 2019).

Still, a crucial issue pertinent to the labour movement in Zimbabwe from the onset of the economic crisis from the 1990s was the scope of economic informalisation which led to a disconnect with the masses of people who were no longer involved in established formal labour relations, did not have easily identifiable employers and, hence, dropped out of the labour movement with all its organisation and mobilisation capacities. The problem was highlighted as early as 1998 at the ZCTU General Council which states that

people from all walks of life are crying out for salvation from the labour movement. Labour should therefore seriously consider and understand the concern of the man in the street. There is a need to seriously consider going beyond the worker and integrate the ordinary people (ZCTU quoted in Raftopoulos, 2009, pp. 204–205).

As Deborah Potts (2011) noted, the distinction made by the ZCTU between ‘workers’ and ‘ordinary people’ was an important signifier of the disconnect between the labour movement and the urban population. While previously an ordinary urban family was a worker’s family, now that the livelihoods became predominantly informal, it may be argued that a worker

²⁸ The pro-ZANU–PF Zimbabwe Federation of Trade Unions was formed in 1997–1998.

acquired a higher social status in the eyes of the labour movement. From the late 1990s, a ‘man in the street’ became the most common socio-economic category, and his disconnect with the organised labour concerned the ZCTU. The fact that the ZCTU has not recognised people who make a living out of the informal sector as ‘workers’ worsened the worker identity problem in the Zimbabwean urban informal sector (see Chapter 3) and aggravated the gap between ‘workers’ and people operating in the informal sector. However, as the economic and financial crisis worsened once again after the GNU period, the boundaries of these occupation identities (worker vs unemployed or informal sector actor), as it were, became blurred. The idea that ‘everything is informal now’ was a common sentiment among the vast majority of my respondents post-2013.

It is, however, important to consider two things. First, it is rather common for trade unions and labour movements across the Global South not to view the informal sector as equal to the formal economy in terms of economic significance, social standing and political potential. A condescending approach to the informal sector as lacking organisation capacities because of its fluidity and established employer–employee relations is not rare at all. As Mike Davis theorised, the growing number of informal sector actors fell outside the domain of industrialisation and urbanisation linked to it as they became ‘the novelty of a true global residuum lacking the strategic economic power of socialised labour’ (Davis, 2004, p. 27). Brian Raftopoulos (2009) also suggests that mass activism of the urban poor is hard to achieve (unlike the labour movement) since they are concerned with possibilities to shore up their livelihoods.

Second, despite the urban socio-economic and political culture in Harare of viewing a formal worker as a ‘proper’ urban citizen in line with the post-colonial (and even colonial) modernist mindset (see Chapter 2), the ZCTU took significant steps to organise and assist people in the informal sector though it has not fully recognised those with informal sector livelihoods as workers. As trade unionists suggest, labour movements are always a ‘game of numbers’ – broad membership is crucial for bargaining, political voice, and funding (Interview with Japhet

Moyo, 22 January 2018; with Timothy Kondo, 8 February 2018; with Elija Mutemeri, 5 March 2018). Two notions were crucial for citizenship shaped and practised by the labour movement – socio-economic and labour rights and collectivity. Both were severely affected in the course of the economic decline from the late 1990s. Japhet Moyo (Interview, 22 January 2018) admitted that the ZCTU was not ready for the scale of economic informalisation: ‘our constitution was not ready’. This conundrum is not unique to Zimbabwe’s labour movement. Although the attitudes of trade unions to the informal sector used to be negative in many countries (Cerviño, 2000; Heery, 2009), trade unions have increasingly adopted a more inclusive approach due to the wide scope of informalisation in the Global South (Schurman and Eaton, 2012). For instance, there is a general argument that trade unions in African countries are in ‘a deep crisis of identity, having not yet devised any new strategies to deal with these dramatic changes [i.e. the expansion of the informal sector]’ (Konings, 2007, p. 364), and to adapt to such qualitative shifts, trade unions had to revise their agendas and definitions of ‘labour’ and ‘worker’ which no longer had the same meaning as in the formal economy (Schurman and Eaton, 2012, p. 13).

Prosper Chitambara from the Labour and Economic Development Research Institute of Zimbabwe (LEDRI) (2006) notes that the early attempts of the ZCTU to work with the informal sector aimed at its formalisation. That would allow for the incorporation into the labour movements. However, once the movement realised that the informal economy was now ‘real’, i.e. its effects became tangible, they formed ZCIEA based on the Ghanaian experience, and with funding from the Trade Union Congress (United Kingdom), and the Informal Economy Desk – a department which already existed within the ZCTU and was headed by Elija Mutemeri (Interview with Japhet Moyo, 22 January 2018; with Elija Mutemeri, 5 March 2018). It was established in 2002 – relatively soon after the ESAP and its destructive impact on formal job opportunities (as is discussed in greater detail in Chapter 6). ZCIEA, however, never became a part of the ZCTU. As Moyo explained, ‘organisations are formed in terms of laws’

and the ZCTU was formed under the Labour Act for collective bargaining with employers. This labour law, however, did not recognise the informal sector, and that was why ZCIEA was not a part of the ZCTU. Still, the initial proximity to the ZCTU allowed for the transfer of the ZCTU ideas and practices of citizenship grounded in the notion of collectivity into ZCIEA which will be discussed in the next Chapter.

Another issue that cuts across the debate about worker identity and the informal sector is the issue of decent work. Fiona Magaya (Interview, 9 March 2018), the head of the ZCTU's Department of Education, Training, Women and Gender, explained that calling informal economic activities 'work', especially by the government, is political and highly problematic:

when our government is saying that 'jobs have been created', they are even saying that a child who sells airtime²⁹ on the streets is working, is economically empowered. They are even saying that a woman who is selling tomatoes is employed. According to them, if a person is doing an economic activity to make an income, they are working. But I think it is a bit unfair because this person [s economic activity] has not been properly legislated, this person is not protected by the law, and if this person has not been incorporated [in the labour legislation], they are not even given an operating space, they are not even getting a decent income. It is one thing to get an income, and it is another thing to get a decent income. We are talking about decent employment here. What is decent? Can that person manage to send the child to school? Can that person manage to send the child to [the] hospital? Can that person manage to prepare a future for their family? Can that person accumulate [a] pension that would assist them when they are too old to work? Where is social protection? In Zimbabwe, informal workers are not part and parcel of the social protection system. They are not: there is no pension for them, there is no medical aid for them.... I think there is a serious gap between formal workers and informal workers.

Although the informal sector existed outside the ZCTU's framework, and the labour movement was not quite inclusive of the informal sector, the ZCTU paid attention to the issues pertinent to people in the informal sector and attempted to engage authorities to address such problems. The ZCTU was concerned with the absence of the informal sector from the labour law and improper regulations of informal economic activities which made people in the informal sector vulnerable to oppression. Fiona Magaya (Interview, 9 March 2018) noted:

It's like everyone is informalised, and the problem with our informal workers is that they are not protected: there is no specific law which protects them, even labour laws don't

²⁹ Pre-paid mobile phone minutes.

speak about the informal sector. They are not there. The policies mainly speak of the formal sector, not informal... And our by-laws which seriously affect them in terms of the operating space and everything, they are so outdated, they've not been reviewed since the colonial era, so they are very outdated by-laws.

The absence of a coherent legal framework for the informal sector was seen as one of the major problems which left people who eked a living out of the informal sector unprotected. As ZCTU's legal advisor Zakeo Mtimtema (Interview, 30 January 2018) noted, there was no national legal framework, and as a result, all cities had their own regulations and by-laws aimed at controlling and regulating informal economic activities. It is frequently believed that such by-laws are colonial, i.e. were written before Zimbabwe's Independence. While some by-laws were revised (*Herald*, 2011a), the nature of relations with the urban informal sector has barely changed: black Zimbabweans now had the right to the city, but as seen in Chapters 2 and 3, not all black Zimbabweans could use the urban space to earn a living but only those who fit the urban modernity framework. In the context of extreme poverty and severely limited opportunities to make a living in a way that the government and local authorities considered acceptable, this effectively meant depriving people of a livelihood.

The ZCTU attempted to highlight the importance of a people-centred approach to development which is expressed in *Beyond the Enclave*, a book published in 2011 by LEDRIZ which explains and promotes the ZCTU's pro-poor and inclusive development strategy and is a follow-up to the ZCTU's 1996 *Beyond the ESAP*. The government, however, did not adopt such an approach: '[people in the informal sector] still have a right to be economically empowered, they still have a right to feed their families, and the government is totally ignoring that' (Interview with Fiona Magaya, 9 March 2018).

The ZCTU also highlighted the need for an instrumental approach to the informal sector, which would benefit both people who earn a living from the informal sector and the government. They proposed that the government create proper vending sites for people in the informal sector with adequate water and sanitation facilities which would be better both for people and for the government that could then charge them tax. Respondents from the ZCTU

were astonished by the government's incapacity and unwillingness to organise the informal sector even for the purposes of taxation: 'the government doesn't even know how to tax informal workers because they are scattered all over' (Interview with Fiona Magaya, 9 March 2018). Japhet Moyo (Interview, 22 January 2018) also highlighted the problem of limited and unreasonable attempts of the government to tax the informal sector which resulted in the overtaxation of people in the informal sector. This, in turn, led to tax avoidance. Moyo blamed the government for it as it failed to provide incentives (services) for people to pay tax.

Despite the non-inclusion of people in the informal sector in the institutions of the ZCTU, the ZCTU stood for their rights and attempted to engage the government to create a more favourable environment for them. The concepts of worker identity and trade unionism being 'the game of numbers' signify the importance of collectivity to the idea of citizenship within the labour movement (see Lazar, 2013). The feeling of belonging to an entity that enhances an individual's capacities to stand for her/his rights is crucial to the experiences of citizenship of trade union members. When people no longer identified with the labour movement, and when the labour movement excluded people who dropped out of the formal economy, it inevitably led to shifts (if not a crisis) in the understanding and practices of citizenship, particularly with relation to socio-economic and labour rights that the trade unions successfully stood for in Zimbabwe before informalisation. Despite a declining political role of the ZCTU due to its decreased membership base, the collectivity notion of citizenship the labour movement shaped partly cascaded into the informal, as will be explored in Chapter 6.

§3. NON-GOVERNMENTAL AND RELIGIOUS ORGANISATIONS ADAPTING TO ECONOMIC INFORMALISATION

NGOs, especially civics, in Zimbabwe have played a crucial role in Zimbabwean politics, particularly in urban areas, and have been instrumental in people's self-manifestation as citizens. I suggest that many civil society actors (NGOs, churches and religious organisations)

adapted to economic informalisation by shifting many of their activities and programmes to the sphere of economic empowerment, socio-economic justice, entrepreneurship, and skills development. The activity of some NGOs and religious organisations, to a degree, shifted from facilitating rights-based citizenship practices to facilitating adaptive resistance aimed at survival and economic empowerment discussed in Chapter 4.

After Independence, the civic movement in Zimbabwe expanded and included a wide range of groups and NGOs pursuing various agendas, such as development, women's rights, students' rights, constitutionalism, socio-economic rights, and civil rights. The 1990s became the high time for the Zimbabwean civil society when NGOs, trade unions and churches challenged the ZANU–PF hegemony and established a constitutionalist movement which later led to the formation of the MDC as a major opposition party on the basis of the ZCTU, Zimbabwe National Students' Union (ZINASU) and National Constitutional Assembly (NCA) (Aeby, 2016, p. 707). As Sara Rich Dorman (2016, p. 116) stresses, in the 1990s, 'NGOs, unions and churches catalysed a very public debate which was seized upon by citizens across the country to articulate critiques of the political and economic environment'. What is also crucial to note is that in the course of this struggle of the civil society, a classic rights-based notion of citizenship came to the forefront as it was pedalled by NGOs, trade unions, and some churches and religious organisations and empowered people to learn about and stand for their rights. This is closely linked to the notions of post-colonial modernity as various civil society actors which became prominent during this period generally used established formal and legal forms of operation, methods of organisation, ideas based on the notions of civil rights, and funding, many of which, however, were later severely affected by informalisation.

The 2000 constitutional referendum was crucial for the civil society in Zimbabwe since, as Sara Rich Dorman (2003) argues, ZANU–PF's failure at the referendum created a precedent that demonstrated to predominantly urban voters that there was a possibility of political action outside the state domain which, in its turn, triggered extremely violent ZANU–PF politics after

2000. Similarly, Cleophas Muneri (2016) suggests that civil society played an important role in Zimbabwean politics in 1999–2009 since it created the discourse of democratisation, broadening the communicative space to include as citizens those people who were excluded by ZANU–PF’s discourse. At the same time, churches made a decision to withdraw from the political arena. Dorman (2002) suggests that churches in Zimbabwe, although may have initiated the political debate, were prone to political and economic pressures from the state, donors, and elites which impeded their participation in politics.

Despite the success of the 1990s and 2000, the power and grassroots support of NGOs diminished throughout the 2000s due to the drastic economic crisis and the government’s repetitive crackdowns on the opposition, political and civic alike (Sachikonye, 2012, pp. 137–143; Chiroro, 2013, p. 118). Owing to the economic decline and administrative challenges, many NGOs became dependent on professionals, and grassroots support of their causes decreased during the GNU. At the same time, NGOs became heavily reliant on donor support (Aeby, 2016; Chipato, 2020) which, in its turn, gave the government an opportunity to discredit and stigmatise them as ‘western agents’ (Aeby, 2016, p. 709). Changes occurred in church–state relations as well since ZANU–PF attempted to bring churches back on their side in the 2000s – with limited success (Dorman, 2016, pp. 176–178).

During the GNU, churches and religious organisations were widely used by politicians, ZANU–PF and opposition alike, who sought to capitalise on church membership and expand their support base (Dorman, 2016, p. 203–204). Churches were mostly comfortable with activities related to peace-building and national reconciliation rather than overtly political activities as opposed to the late 1990s–early 2000s (Ibid.). The attitude of churches to the government, however, was not homogenous. David Maxwell (2006, pp. 146–151) suggests that it is not only political actors who may use churches to achieve their goals, but churches may align with political actors and use them. The Zimbabwe Assemblies of God, for example, used its relationship with the state to its advantage expanding the church, and when this arrangement

stopped suiting the church (when ZANU–PF started employing violence towards the opposition) the church distanced itself from the party in fear of losing its membership in townships.

Sara Rich Dorman (2016, pp. 200–201) indicates that although NGOs were excluded from power-sharing negotiations, many of them benefitted from the period of relative stability and calm. Still, although the government did not oppress NGOs overtly, it used more sophisticated tactics to suppress their activities related to democratisations, free and fair elections, and human rights during the GNU period, specifically targeting organisations, like the Zimbabwe Lawyers for Human Rights or Zimbabwe Human Rights Association. ‘Counter-hegemonic’ NGOs, i.e. those which stood against ZANU–PF’s hegemony, to use Cornelias Ncube’s (2010) terminology, were in a challenging position during the GNU as now their political allies (MDC) were a part of the government, it was harder to criticise the government (Dorman, 2016, p. 201).

All these changes in the Zimbabwean civics, churches and religious organisations were occurring in the context of the economic decline and rapidly expanding informal sector. The academic literature on civics and the informal sector in general highlights the complexities of their relationship. Drawing on a study of ten cities in developing countries, Diana Mitlin (2004) suggests that grassroots NGOs are largely ineffective in facilitating the political participation and empowerment of the poor and service delivery as such organisations may be exclusive, and their leaders may engage in clientelist relationships with the government or political parties. Such patterns contribute to further marginalisation of already vulnerable and politically and economically excluded groups. These organisations may also fail to operate at the city level and implement their programmes effectively, giving preference to short-term outcomes rather than long-term goals. Scholars of the Zimbabwean civil society, however, have not looked in detail at the interaction and engagement of NGOs with people in the informal sector.

Hope Chigudu (Interview, 21 February 2018), prominent Zimbabwean feminist activist and co-founder of the Zimbabwe Women's Resource Centre and Network, noted that in the course of economic informalisation and broader political crisis and development in the civil society, NGOs were surpassed as key actors while community and church organising increased. However, at first, some NGOs even benefitted from economic informalisation. Lovemore Madhuku (Interview, 23 January 2018), the founder of the NCA, a major NGO in the 1990s which became one of the founders of the MDC, said that informalisation had a positive effect on the organisation and that the informal sector found the message of the NCA attractive. One of the major activities of the NCA was civic education workshops, and while formal workers found it hard to attend those due to their working hours and constituted less than 20% of the attendees, people in the informal sector were more flexible – they attended workshops and participated in peaceful protests, and the food and transportation costs were paid for by the NCA. During the GNU, however, as the funding declined, people stopped coming to meetings when they had to pay. The fact that informal sector activities do not have fixed working hours means that the longer one works, the more money s/he can possibly make, and in the grave economic situation, it is not possible to expect people to sacrifice both their time and potential income for attending a workshop or participating in a protest.

The key segments of the civil society (besides the labour and constitutional movement) which existed before large-scale economic informalisation and had to adapt to the drastically changing economic environment exacerbated by political oppression were women's organisations, youth organisation, residents' association, and churches. Many of them diversified their efforts from rights-based citizenship to ensuring self-reliant citizenship of informal sector players due to severe economic and financial conditions as well as extreme political polarisation and repressions during the 2000s.

Women's organisations and movements have looked into gender issues and the economic empowerment of women from colonial times. As Bella Matambanadzo (Interview,

14 February 2018) of Zimbabwe Women's Resource Centre and Network indicated, the genesis of the civil society in Zimbabwe was in women's self-help organisations, such as the Association of Women's Club, a grassroots organisation with training and microcredit schemes for women. As she noted, 'this economy [was] carried by women' as the informal sector was comprised mostly of women, and it was essential to address the problems women faced. The Self-Help Development Foundation's executive director Wadzanai Vere (Interview, 22 February 2018) also stressed that especially after ESAP the demand for capital and microfinance programmes increased as more actors entered the informal sector as a primary source of livelihood. However, around 2014–2015 the Foundation shifted its attention from providing financial support to facilitating the emergence of economically independent grassroots women who could facilitate sustainable development. Pamela Mhlanga (Interview, 5 February 2018), Women's Resource Centre and Network executive director, also noted that local savings clubs were important for women in the informal sector as financial institutions did not address women's financial hardships. The key goal was to create an environment conducive to women and to achieve equality and non-discrimination of women in the informal sector (Interview with Pamela Mhlanga, 5 February 2018; with Sally Ncube [Dura], 13 February 2018). Similarly, Margaret Mutsamvi (Interview, 8 February 2018) from the Economic Justice for Women stressed that one of the priorities was to relocate women vending in the streets to safer areas as women and children who operated from the streets faced many risks. In general, women's NGOs were responsive to economic informalisation, although many activities were self-help by nature and were aimed at economically empowering women and teaching them to support themselves in the harsh economic and political conditions, facilitating self-reliant citizenship (see Chapter 4). However, their capacities were rather limited due to the broader crisis in the country.

Youth organisations have started looking into entrepreneurship as it gradually became clear that even well-educated and qualified university graduates could not get formal jobs in Zimbabwe. Francis Rwodzi, former director of the Youth Agenda Trust, noted that while

before 2012 the organisation focused on political rights as it was founded by students, around 2012–2013, its activities shifted towards economic empowerment and sexual and reproductive health. The National Association of Youth Organisations, an umbrella body for youth organisations similarly focused on entrepreneurship skills, young farmers' clubs, as well as capacity building, training and networking (joint programme with the World Bank) (Interview with Misheck Gondo, 25 January 2018). They also attempted to start a dialogue with the authorities to bridge the generation gap – the problem which was felt by many young people. Other youth organisations operated as umbrella bodies aimed at facilitating coordination and networking among youth organisations and advocacy to create a conducive environment for youth programming economically and politically (Interview with Rosewita Katsande, 7 March 2018). Some organisations emerged to address the social consequences of youth unemployment. For example, Ishmail Kauzani (Interview, 1 March 2018), the Unemployed Youth Organisation chairperson, explained the organisation's purposes: 'we are trying to bring together the unemployed youth, create some jobs for them by creating self-sustained projects... to prevent unwanted [criminal] behaviour. If we bring them together, we will keep them occupied, and they will have a vision that one day I will have a job, one day I will be a businessperson'. The organisation tried to focus on facilitating small businesses run by young people, especially related to manufacturing and production (Interview with Admire, 14 March 2018). Some organisations found it hard to adapt to the rapidly changed economic and political environment. ZINASU was one of the strongest and largest organisations that had a strong political impact in the 1990s and 2000s, however, throughout the economic crisis and informalisation, both education and students' incomes (and their families' incomes) were severely affected alongside the Union's decreasing political influence since the GNU period (Interview with Hopewell Gumbo, 13 February 2018; with Clever Bere, 21 February 2018; with Obert Masaraure, 12 February 2018). It was only in the 2010s when ZINASU fully realised the scope of economic informalisation and its consequences for university graduates and started

thinking about the prospects of entrepreneurship training for students to adapt to the dramatically changed economic conditions.

Residents' associations have focused on the issues of housing and service delivery both of which have largely failed in the course of economic and political crisis from the late 1990s. Since they have extensive grassroots membership and deal directly with people's living conditions individuals who earn a living from the informal sector are actively involved in their meetings, discussions, and activities. As Precious Shumba (Interview, 1 February 2018), the director of Harare Residents' Trust noted, members from the informal sector are crucial for the work of residents' association, and it is essential to engage them and account for their interests: 'you don't just meet them when you want'. Marvelous Khumalo (Interview, 26 January 2018) from Chitungwiza and Manyame Rural Residents' Association claimed that the urban crisis and rise of the informal sector had the same causes – the crisis of governance and illegitimate government which did not care about service delivery and economic development, and as a result, the 'informal economy has been given the burden to carry Zimbabwe forward'. Mfundo Mlilo (Interview, 23 January 2018) of the Combined Harare Residents' Association, an umbrella body for residents' associations, stressed that 'the agenda of economic security [was] [the Association's] agenda'. One of the issues the Combined Harare Residents' Association has discussed with the local authorities was the provision of vending spaces. As Mlilo noted, over 30,000 vending spaces were demanded, but only 6,000 were provided. He also noted that residents' associations cooperated with churches which helped with providing venues and information dissemination. In similarity with trade unions, numbers are crucial for residents' association, and collectivity is central for pressuring the local authorities to provide housing, services and vending spaces for residents and informal sector actors. As seen in Chapter 4, individuals generally resort to self-sufficient citizenship, but institutions like residents' associations may employ the notion of collectivity at the local level to facilitate engagement

between informal sector actors (or residents generally) and local authorities while other civil society actors may facilitate it.

As mentioned above, with the intensification of political polarisation, many churches and religious organisations distanced themselves from politics, at least publicly. However, churches became important sites and spaces for people earning a living from the informal sector. Churches and religious organisation were highly concerned with the economic justice issues and problems pertinent to the informal sector (Interview with Ronald Nare, 24 January 2018). However, not all churches had to address economic informalisation as a new drastic development. The case with apostolic churches was rather different as some of them historically encouraged informal economic activities from colonial times as a part of fighting against the domination of white colonisers, and their church members were already self-sufficient, to a large extent (Interview with Innocent Chitanda, 26 April 2018). For them, it was more important to 'bridge the gap between the government and churches' and teach their members to develop and formalise their businesses (Ibid.). This, however, is a rather exceptional case as many churches were negatively affected by the economic crisis and informalisation and had to adopt a developmental role and introduce workshops and training programmes aimed at developing particular skills useful for informal economic activities. Jonah Gokova of the Ecumenical Support Services (and the founding chairperson of the Zimbabwe Coalition for Debt and Development) (Interview, 6 February 2018) noted that the Ecumenical Centre for Social Justice was engaging with the informal sector and looked into what role may the church play to help people understand economic processes. Rev Solomon Zwana (Interview, 20 February 2018), Presiding Bishop of the Methodist Church, noted that the church felt the impact of economic informalisation in many ways. For example, donations decreased as poverty rose: 'church experiences poverty with people'. The church had to address the psychological challenges of operating in the informal sector. As he noted, there was a dominant idea that 'if you are selling roasted mielies [maize meal], you failed in life', and it was hard for people to adapt to this:

‘people saying that I am here temporarily and if there is an opportunity, I can move’. Third, he stressed that the church was involved in training people in basic human rights: ‘one of the things is to explain to people that they matter... [and] return people their voices back’. Rev Solomon Zwana explained that the culture of the informal sector was a culture of struggle and survival which gave room for anger, violence and patronage. ‘People who are vending are almost offering themselves to abuse’, he said. The church was also concerned with the violence and abuse that people experienced in the informal sector.

Fr Frederick Chiromba (Interview, 1 March 2018), the Secretary-General of the Zimbabwe Catholic Bishops’ Conference, shared most of these observations. He also noted that most people were not used to the informal sector, and it was hard for them to adapt. The Catholic Church was placing emphasis on skills training – the need for it was ‘long realised’ and the church offered grants and support to informal entrepreneurs. St Peter’s Church in Mbare, for example, ran income-generating projects through micro-credit schemes for help people establish their businesses, e.g. poultry, peanut butter, sewing, or making detergents (Interview with Isaac Fernandez, 17 April 2018). The church also prioritised the grievances of women and children and aimed at empowering women and facilitating children’s access to education (Interview with Frederick Chiromba, 1 March 2018). It also addressed the issues of livelihoods, food security, HIV, water and sanitation, and social protection through its charity Caritas (Interview with Christopher Mweembe, 5 March 2018). Fr Farai Mutamiri, the dean of the Anglican Diocese of Harare (Interview, 6 March 2018), also stressed that if earlier, before the crisis, informalisation, and poverty, people supported the church through donations, now the church had to support its members. Rev Davis Mambure (Interview, 24 April 2018) of the True Word Church International similarly argued that the church supported the informal sector, but at the individual level as in the challenging economic situation it was essential to empower people and enable them ‘to stand on their own’. As early as 2006 churches (Zimbabwe Council

of Churches, Evangelical Fellowship of Zimbabwe and Zimbabwe Catholic Bishops Conference) stressed that

it is necessary to mainstream the informal sector dominated by the marginalised groups such as women, children and the poor in general, into the formal economy. Government must endeavour to strengthen people where they are currently eking a living, and not to be inhibitive and punitive. There is need to build bridges between people and government (ZCC, EFZ and ZCBC, 2006).

Still, as measures taken by the government and their implementation have been largely unproductive and did not sufficiently economically empower people, different churches worked with their congregations to facilitate their members' ability to adapt to economic informalisation and face the challenges it presented while attempting to engage the government in the dialogue and facilitate economic improvement (for example, through pastoral letters of the Catholic Church [ZCBC, 2015]). By doing so, they facilitated self-sufficient citizenship, the major expression of lived citizenship of the economic informalisation era as well as adaptive capacities of their members – all while trying to bring the government to action.

It is important to note, however, that despite the focus on socio-economic rights adopted by many NGOs and religious organisations, some civics engaged with the informal sector without losing their focus on rights as socio-economic rights are a part of the human rights agenda. The Zimbabwe Human Rights Association (ZIMRIGHTS), for example, got involved with the informal sector as most of its members were there and supported groups in the informal sector (Interview with Leo Chamahwinya, 1 February 2018). So did many other civics as will be discussed in greater detail in the next Chapter.

Overall, engagement of NGOs, churches and religious organisations with the informal sector has been largely centred on the development of skills that would help people earn a living in the informal sector and manage finances. They were aimed at boosting people's abilities to adapt to the radically changed environment, support their adaptation skills and efforts, and stimulate self-sufficient citizenship (see Chapter 4). Accompanied by the broader decline of civil society, professionalisation of NGOs, reduction of donor funding, and limited grassroots

support of their activities, NGOs' direct engagement with many informal sector issues was not profound as they were not always central to NGOs' agendas. This, in part, stimulated the emergence of a novel kind of NGO – informal sector organisations which specifically address the issues of the informal sector and engage with more established civil society partners for this cause, building on the experience of earlier civil society actors as explored in Chapter 6. The activity of NGOs, civics and religious organisations in the 1990s and early 2000s laid the foundations of rights-based citizenship which has had long-lasting consequences, including in the informal sector.

§4. POPULAR PROTEST MOVEMENTS AND THE INFORMAL SECTOR IN HARARE

In addition to the developments in 'mainstream' civil society explored above, new kinds of civic and political movements emerged in 2016 which also provided space and for the activity of the informal sector – so-called 'hashtag' popular protests movements. Economic informalisation and the socio-economic and political crises became central issues for this broader civic and political activism when popular protests, such as #ThisFlag, #ThisGown, #Tajamuka, and #OccupyAfricaUnitySquare, entered Zimbabwe's civic and political arena, mostly in urban areas and particularly in Harare. Although all protests had their specific characteristics and purposes, the major goal of those protests was resistance to the incumbent regime due to widespread economic and political problems, such as political oppression, human rights violations, corruption, political violence, unemployment, financial hardships, and service delivery crises. These protests were closely tied to social media as they used social media platforms (*WhatsApp*, *Facebook* and *Twitter*) for organisation and mobilisation, and as the space for online activism as well (Karekwaivanane and Mare, 2019). As George Karekwaivanane and Admire Mare (Ibid.) argue, these protests can be seen as a performance of 'insurgent citizenship' – resistance practices aimed at restoring citizenship rights by confronting citizen inequalities

(Holston, 2008). I suggest that popular protest movements became another space in which informal sector actors were side-lined and not given enough credit. Leaders of popular protest movements had a largely instrumental attitude to the informal sector. Overall, similar modernist narratives and appeals were present in these protests, and the informal sector was not given the central place.

Economic issues, especially vast unemployment, became a core issue on the agenda of many hashtag movements. However, while activists and leaders of protests claimed that the informal sector was ‘important’ for protests (Interviews with Linda Masarira, 6 February 2018; with Promise Mkwanzani, 28 January 2018; with Evan Mawarire, 6 March 2018), the approach of these movements to the informal sector and individuals in the informal sector was predominantly instrumental and not fully inclusive in terms of leadership, decision-making, and acknowledgement of contribution and needs. This, however, does not mean that informal sector actors did not practice insurgent citizenship. Rather, such practices did not necessarily happen within popular protest movements. In addition, while all popular protest movements claim to represent all citizens, but as George Karekwaivanane (2016) pointed out, there is a digital divide in Zimbabwe – protest movements rely largely on *Twitter*, *Facebook*, and *WhatsApp* for mobilisation, but many people involved in the informal sector use *WhatsApp* only, and others cannot even afford that.

The status of these new (for Zimbabwe) kind of protests is unclear. They were incredibly heterogeneous, did not have a shared detailed agenda, emerged and operated separately from one another, and had different groups of participants. They can hardly be seen as an extension of the more common for Zimbabwe civil society protests, e.g. those that were previously organised by trade unions and established NGOs. Studying protests in several African countries (Sudan, Nigeria and Uganda), Adam Branch and Zachariah Mampilly (2015), suggest that protests in Africa are different from protests in western countries: ‘the politics of protest in Africa cannot be read from models imported from other historical experiences of what ‘proper’ protest

is supposed to look like' (Ibid., p 7). They argue that this is due to the historical development of the African urban underclass during the colonial period, which left a legacy in the contemporary political setting. Branch and Mampilly suggest that the history of the violent backlash on the African underclass also poses challenges to the nonviolent discipline of protest movements as it is often hard to overcome state violence and maintain the non-violent protest nature at the same time. In addition, they suggest that protests should not be judged by the goals they achieve as these may not be clearly stated or may change over time: 'protests should be understood according to how it attempts to transform the national political questions that structure state power and how that protest answers, avoids, or is torn apart by the deep political dilemmas that may require resolution for democratic change to take hold' (Ibid., p. 10). The authors state explicitly that theoretical frameworks that are usually used for the analysis of popular protest movements are inapplicable in Africa due to the abovementioned specific characteristics of African uprisings.

A similar argument is made in relation to the participation of the informal sector in popular protests. Asef Bayat (1997) suggests that the urban uprising is incredibly important in the politics of developing countries, and he also implies that these protests are different from the classical social movements, i.e. those described by Scott (1985), Castells (1983), Schuurman and van Naerssen (1989), and Friedmann (1989a; 1989b), since the new urban protests are spontaneous, partially individualistic, and self-generating (i.e. not started by charismatic leaders). Bayat calls this type of urban protest 'the quiet encroachment of the ordinary', i.e. a silent and patient protest of the urban poor against the state or the elites to improve their well-being. A different position is presented by Jon Shefner (2006) who suggests that a battle for survival may not necessarily entail democratisation. He uses the example of Guadalajara, Mexico, where informal sector actors at first mobilised to bargain with the authorities about service delivery, but after the authorities failed to fulfil their promises, mobilisation of the informal sector decreased. This was partially caused by the deteriorating economic situation,

and NGOs became the last escape for people in the informal sector who sought to access services and material resources. Popular protest movements in Zimbabwe are, however, different as the informal sector was never given the central role, although informal sector actors (both individuals and some organisations) joined the protests.

The participation of the informal sector in protests may be seen through the lens of the precariat uprising. Guy Standing (2014, p. 10) notes that this class rises as the proletariat shrinks: ‘those in the precariat have no secure occupational identity; no occupational narrative they can give to their lives’. He stresses that ‘[t]he precariat’s main struggle is for a redistribution of the key assets of economic security, control over time, quality space, real liberating education, financial knowledge and financial and other capital’ (Ibid., p. 12). While this may be applied to Harare’s informal sector, in the Zimbabwean protests, the informal sector did not occupy a central place in all major protest movements, and the approach of leaders of such movements to the informal sector has been rather instrumental. This was also reflected in academic works as recent studies about popular protest movements in Zimbabwe do not wholly focus on the role of the informal sector, although they acknowledge economic grievances as one of the protest triggers (Raftopoulos, 2016; Karekwaivanane, 2016).

Pastor Evan Mawarire, the founder of #ThisFlag (Interview, 6 March 2018), explained that the movement was launched by him posting videos of himself in which he talked about ‘corruption, poverty and injustice from a personal perspective’, and a lot of people identified with his sentiment. The movement played a crucial role in empowering citizens since ‘the voice of citizens was excluded from the development in Zimbabwe for 36 years’. #Tajamuka (see below), in his opinion, was a movement of young people driven by political parties while #ThisFlag was a grassroots movement. Still, the two worked hand in hand on some issues. Mawarire argued that the job of the government was ‘to create an economic environment for people to earn [a living] and fulfil their dreams’. The government, however, failed to do so which led to the growth of the informal sector which he saw as the ‘reality’, a tangible expression

of the crisis in Zimbabwe. He strongly criticised the approach of the government to the informal sector:

first of all, the informal sector... is the reflection of the government's failure, and the government doesn't want to see its failures. One of the problems of government in Zimbabwe is the refusal to face their failures head-on. So, the informal sector is a reminder to anyone who walks into our country that this government has failed. It [the government's approach] is not just about marginalising [the informal sector], they are trying to wipe it out, The second thing, I think, why the government wants to exclude it or close it down is that it's hard to control. The informal sector doesn't work according to monetary policy, doesn't work according to the government's legislation, doesn't pay tax, don't get licenses, don't operate from licensed spaces. So the government, instead of finding space for the informal sector which has been driving our economy, they keep making an error of wanting to shut it down.

#ThisFlag, however, was generally seen as an elitist middle-class movement (Dendere, 2019), and direct participation of individuals from the informal sector was limited. Within that movement, the informal sector's major role was to signify the economic and political failures of the ZANU–PF government.

#Tajamuka representatives also had an instrumental approach to the informal sector. In 2016, Promise Mkwanzani (Interview, 28 January 2018), a former student leader and prominent MDC youth activist, became the spokesperson of #Tajamuka (although he resigned in 2017 amidst corruption allegations [Chiduku, 2017]). As he defined it, #Tajamuka was a non-violent, non-hierarchical, citizen-centred social democratic movement made up largely of young people. As he suggested, unlike #ThisFlag which, in his opinion was elitist and 'soft-way', #Tajamuka was an inclusive and 'hard-way' movement, i.e. not afraid of confrontation with the government forces in a peaceful way. He saw the great potential of the informal sector in terms of political mobilisation because it was very mobile and occupied a significant part of the urban space: '[people in the informal sector] are self-mobilised – if you are able to persuade them [to stand for the cause you are promoting], you don't need to transport them'. As he explained, the grievances of the informal sector were a part of the contribution to the broader protest issue which was first and foremost about the discontent with continuous political

oppression. Mkwanzani suggested that NGOs were important partners in the democratisation struggle, but they had to ‘reawaken the spirit of protest’.

Other #Tajamuka leaders had a more detailed vision for the informal sector, especially the problem of the youth in the informal sector since #Tajamuka was youth-driven. Gift Ostallos Siziba (Interview, 13 February 2018), one of the founding members and spokesperson of #Tajamuka explained that the crisis which led to the emergence of movements, like #ThisFlag and #Tajamuka, was not so much about unemployment and poverty (although these were urgent issues). Rather, it was a political crisis as the government was hypocritical in saying that it had a socialist orientation while pursuing other policies on which there was no national consensus, and as a result, the social contract collapsed. The government, as he suggested, was oriented towards the public sector while ‘fighting’ the private sector and had ‘no orientation to people working for themselves’. A core issue which, he argued, was at the heart of protest movements was the generational conflict: a lot of middle-class people were in the diaspora, so the generational gap became even clearer and the exclusion and exploitation of the youth cut across not just the government, but also political parties, church, and business. That also became a source of discontent for the young people who supported protest movements. Their discontent, however, encompassed the domain of student politics and addressed the failure of the government to propose and implement meaningful policies that would kickstart the economy and create job opportunities – problems which were pertinent to the entire society and which young people, including recent school-leavers and university graduates, experienced as well since most had to resort to informal sector activities to earn a living.

Young Zimbabweans also engaged in popular movements with narrow agendas which also did not extend to the broad informal sector. As seen in Chapter 3, young Zimbabweans have challenged the modernist education-employment nexus and questioned the existing assumptions about their future in Zimbabwe grounded in modernist ideas of social mobility via education. The youths’ frustration as citizens was expressed not only in their narratives and

popular culture but also in their political actions. Previously, students could use another social mobility opportunity: a transition from student activism in ZINASU to opposition party politics, especially in the MDC (Hodgkinson, 2018). After the power-sharing negotiations in the aftermath of the 2008 elections, the student movement felt that their interests were betrayed by the MDC, and student activists largely lost that mobility opportunity (Ibid.). Even though students could no longer use the transition path from student activism to opposition party politics (Hodgkinson, 2018), they remained politically active as citizens, developing new ways of attracting attention and making political statements that addressed a broader socio-political agenda that the country faced. One of these was the Coalition of Unemployed Graduates and #ThisGown movement.³⁰ This was a non-violent protest movement that emerged in 2016 to voice the problems of recent university graduates, primarily in terms of the formal economy collapse and lack of employment opportunities, which graduates faced as they entered the labour market (Gukurume, 2017; Hodgkinson, 2016; Mananavire, 2016; Masanga, 2016; Sachikonye, Raftopoulos and Kanyenze, 2018, p. 190; Quist-Arcton, 2016; see also *Twitter*, 2020a for social media coverage of #ThisGown protests). As Simbarashe Gukurume (2017) argues, unemployed university graduates who moved to the informal sector to earn a living and existed in what was termed ‘waithood’ (Honwana, 2013; Singerman, 2007) massively supported these movements, particularly #ThisGown (see Chapter 3 on the visions of the past, present, and future in Zimbabwe). Their participation in popular ‘hashtag’ protests was stimulated by harsh economic and social conditions and failed expectations of employment and economic mobility. Economic problems, the decay of the formal economy, and the proliferation of the informal sector were important issues for popular protest movements from 2016 and, together with the broader political issues in urban Zimbabwe and the civil society, had a profound impact on the understanding of citizenship in urban Zimbabwe. Many points on the agendas of these movements, e.g. restoration of the formal economy and restoration of public service provision,

³⁰ A reference to an academic gown worn during a graduation ceremony.

are firmly tied to the modernist mindset and notions of post-colonial modernity in the urban context, and these protests, in general, may be viewed as another form of appeal through insurgent citizenship practices to the return to these notions of modernity.

People who earned a living from the informal sector whom I interviewed in 2016 and 2018 did not express a great deal of support for these protest movements. Most people were preoccupied with survival issues. 'We just suffer quietly', as my respondent said (Interview with Holly, 22 August 2016). One of the most prominent events during these protests was the stayaway on 6 July 2016. The nationwide success of this stayaway was claimed to be due to the efforts of transport operators and civil servants. While their role should not be underestimated, many people in the informal sector I interviewed also did not work on that day and spoke proudly about it (Interview with Anna, 27 July 2016; with Molly, 16 August 2016; with Stacey, 16 August 2016; with Wellington, 16 August 2016; with James, 28 August 2016), but the role of the informal sector beyond transport operators was largely overlooked by the media and political analysts. As Pedzisai Ruhanya (Interview, 28 July 2016) suggests,

[in 2016 there were] the rallies of subaltern groups... But they are not analysed, they are not projected, they are not given a voice because people want to see [Pastor Evan] Mawarire, people want to see [Morgan] Tsvangirai, want to see 'big guys', but these are not everyday forms of resistance that are taking place in Zimbabwe.

Overall, popular protests movements became another form of political and civic activity in which informal sector actors were side-lined or at the very least were not given sufficient credit. Although it might be argued that the issues of the informal sector cannot be separated from the broader civic and political agenda, an instrumental approach to informal sector actors does not facilitate the improvement of the conditions in the informal sector or empowerment of people in the informal sector specifically. As this mode of protests overstepped the boundaries of typical 'modern' organised civil society protests, such protests were usually led by the people who reproduced the same modernist narratives in which the informal sector occupied a marginal place.

§5. CONCLUSION

Civil society has played an important role in Zimbabwean politics and stood for constitutionalism, human rights, labour rights, and democracy. However, economic informalisation has had a profound and predominantly negative impact on all areas of socio-political life and on all actors in that field. Most civil society actors were not ready to embrace it and under the impact of informalisation as well as broader economic decay and political oppression significantly lost influence. Still, they had an impact on people's lives and experiences of citizenship as they laid the foundations of citizenship ideas, such as collectivity and rights.

The ZCTU was one of the strongest civil society actors in Zimbabwe before the beginning of the economic crisis. It stood up for labour rights and represented the interests of thousands of workers across the country. Membership played a vital role for the ZCTU, and their citizenship was based on collectivity as large numbers allowed them to successfully defend workers' rights. However, informalisation led to a significant decrease in the ZCTU's membership base which has affected their activity. Due to their definition of a 'worker', the ZCTU was also unable (and perhaps unwilling) to include people who earned a living from the informal sector in the labour movement. However, they facilitated the establishment of ZCIEA and equipped it with particular ideas about citizenship based on collectivity.

NGOs and religious organisations were equally important civil society actors in Zimbabwe before informalisation. They also stood for the rights of different groups of people (for example, women, children, students) as well as promoting a broader democratic agenda – constitutional rights, democracy, and non-violence. However, informalisation, the politicisation of civil society, and political oppression and violence in the 2000s affected them as well. Some NGOs at first benefitted from informalisation as it allowed them to mobilise people more effectively since they were not restricted by working hours. Civics at that time shaped and employed a rights-based notion of citizenship which, as it is discussed in the following Chapter,

also transferred into the informal sector. However, donor fatigue and the professionalisation of NGOs contributed to the decline of their activity. Some NGOs shifted their attention to the needs of groups they represented related to their informal sector livelihoods. Their capacities, however, were limited due to the abovementioned issues. Churches and church-based organisations also shifted their attention to the needs of people in the informal sector as they constituted the vast majority of their members and introduced skills training, community organising, financial support, and psychological support related to the informal economic activities and livelihoods. Such measures facilitated adaptation skills of their members and ideas and practices of self-reliant citizenship which became the dominant mode of lived citizenship in the context of vast economic informalisation.

Popular protest movements became a new civil society phenomenon after 2013. They responded to the consequences of the economic crisis, corruption, failures of service delivery, and human rights violations. However, their attitude to the informal sector was predominantly instrumental: they largely saw it as a sign of the political failure of ZANU–PF or as a source of potential supporters who are already mobilised due to the nature of their economic activities. In general, protest movements largely became another form of civic and political activity and organisation in which the informal sector was side-lined as many of their demands were grounded in modernist views.

Despite these negative impacts on civil society and the marginalisation of the informal sector, there were new developments related to the organisation of the informal sector as new actors emerged to represent people who operated in the informal sector – informal sector organisations. These were related closely to civil society organisations' ideas and practices of citizenship even if they often existed outside of them and they had a profound impact on their members' political activities and experiences of citizenship, as is discussed in the following Chapter.

CHAPTER 6.

ASSOCIATIONAL LIFE IN HARARE'S INFORMAL SECTOR AND VARIATIONS OF CITIZENSHIP

§1. INTRODUCTION

As the trade unions, non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and religious organisations were significantly affected by both the economic crisis and political processes in Zimbabwe, they were not fully able to grasp and address the needs and interests of people in the informal sector. Organisation and associational life in the informal sector itself have become crucial for the representation of thousands of people who engaged in informal economic activities as a primary source of livelihood.

This Chapter explores three informal sector organisations (ISOs) in Harare (Zimbabwe Chamber of Informal Economy Associations [ZCIEA], National Vendors Union of Zimbabwe [NAVUZ], and Zimbabwe Informal Sector Organisation [ZISO]) which became particularly prominent around 2016–2017, in the context of post-2013 worsening of economic and financial conditions as well as another spiral of the political crisis and the broader civic and political awakening in 2016–2017 explored in the previous Chapter. It argues that ISOs in Harare, despite being newly constituted actors, have helped bridge the informal sector and politics and have shaped distinct ideas about citizenship among their members, grounded in the collective identities of these ISOs and based on distinct and well-established notions of citizenship. In particular, ZCIEA shaped a notion of citizenship based on the notion of collectivity, NAVUZ developed a rights-based understanding, while ZISO shaped a respectability-based notion of citizenship grounded in the ideas of urban and economic modernity. These ideas about citizenship were generated and practised earlier: collectivity-based notion was employed by trade unions, rights-based – by civics (see Chapter 5), and respectability-based – by the African middle class in the colonial and post-colonial periods (see Chapter 2).

The Chapter engages with the literature on associational life in the informal sector in developing countries, its possibility, practices, successes, failures, and challenges. Methodologically, it includes a wide variety of sources: primarily, interviews but also documents and advertising materials, social media and mass media sources. The combination of these allows us to see a detailed picture of the activities of ISOs, especially around 2016–2017, and their impacts on members and relationships with the government and local authorities.

I first consider the practices and prospects of organisation in the informal sector in developing countries and their meanings for the Zimbabwean urban informal sector. Then, I look at a broad spectrum of associational life in Harare’s informal sector and consider the issue of collective identity in the informal sector. Third, I look at the organisational characteristics of NAVUZ, ZCIEA and ZISO. Finally, the Chapter explores the political activities and different notions and practices of citizenship which have been shaped in these ISOs and are grounded in their collective identities and organisational characteristics.

§2. GENERAL PRACTICES, CHALLENGES, AND PROSPECTS OF ASSOCIATIONAL LIFE IN THE INFORMAL SECTOR AND THEIR IMPLICATIONS FOR ZIMBABWE

Associational life in the informal sector and its viability are widely debated topics. Organisation in the informal sector is challenging because it is incredibly heterogenous and dispersed. The success of organisation in the informal sector depends on multiple factors – leadership characteristics, the scope of work, goals, interests of members, relationships with authorities, and methods of operation. Despite these challenges, associational life is important for the representation and protection of interests and the rights of individuals in the informal sector, and some ISOs have been successful in doing so. In Zimbabwe, ISOs face additional challenges as well since they are new actors which only emerged in the aftermath of the economic crisis and radical informalisation and, I will argue, they occupy a unique place between civil and ‘un-civil’ society due to the nature of informal sector activities, which

authorities frequently consider illegal. Despite that, they are crucial for the organisation and shaping of collective identities and ideas about citizenship among their members.

Various aspects of associational life in the informal sector and its impact on citizenship among ISO members are not rare in the academic literature. I argue that although ISOs are a recent, fluid and rather volatile phenomenon in Zimbabwe, they have had a significant political impact, particularly around 2016–2017, during the broader political and civic awakening expressed through popular protests (see Chapter 5). ISOs in Zimbabwe, in a way, bridged the informal economy and politics by challenging the marginalisation of the informal sector, developing ways of both engaging with and disengaging from the government and local authorities, and shaping notions of citizenship among their members which, although distinct in each organisation, were based on earlier forms of citizenship that were evident in the discussion of civil society in Chapter 5. The analysis of academic literature on associational life in the informal sector is important as it helps us better understand ISOs and their political roles. The academic literature demonstrates that associational life in the informal sector is complex and heterogeneous, depends on historically shaped ideas and practices, political context, and ISOs relationship with other political actors.

There has been extensive scholarly attention to the expansion of the informal sector, especially in developing countries (see, for instance, AlSayyad, 2004; Bryceson, 2006; Cross and Morales, 2007; Rakodi and Lloyd-Jones, 2002). One of the areas that has captured the attention of scholars is personal networks in the informal sector and their role in sustaining urban livelihoods, especially in the context of economic, social, and political crises (Lourenço-Lindell, 2002; Simone, 2004). Researchers have argued that such informal networks should be seen as the basis for a new kind of urban politics in which the informal sector plays a crucial role and which allows marginalised informal sector actors to claim their right to the city, therefore, positively influencing their citizenship experiences (Bayat, 2004; Pieterse, 2008; Simone, 2004). Ilda Lindell (2010b; 2010c), however, offers a different take on networks in the informal sector

and draws attention to collective organising in the informal sector and the political roles of such organisations, and this is where my focus lies.

There have been academic debates about the role and even the mere possibility of the political influence of informal sector groupings in developing countries (see Lindell, 2010a for a major debate). Some authors argue that ISOs are unlikely to have significant political influence. Alison Brown and Michal Lyons (2010) have suggested that in Dar es Salaam, Dakar, Accra and Kathmandu, traders' organisations failed to exercise long-term influence on urban governance and to extend urban citizenship to their members as these organisations were marginalised, not fully representative, and did not engage in advocacy. Kate Meagher (2010; 2011) looks at ISOs in Nigeria and suggests that political and economic liberalisation shook the basis of informal manufacturing clusters in Nigeria and provoked conflicts within these organisations which made the organisations' leaders adopt an authoritarian leadership style and become more dependent on the state and other NGOs for resource provision and also prone to political co-optation. Meagher (2014) suggests that continuous economic and social stresses and political exclusion in Nigeria led to 'disempowerment from below' which exacerbated fragmentation and marginalisation of the informal sector. By contrast, Ebbe Prag (2010) has argued that in Benin, female traders' associations influenced policies concerning their livelihoods and work conditions in the informal retail sector. Prag suggests that leaders of these organisations used their informal political networks to advance their agendas and promote collective interests of women in the informal sector. In the end, political elites avoided conflict with these organisations because of the pressure they were able to exert. Thus, the political impact of organisations and their effectiveness in achieving political goals depends on internal organisational and leadership characteristics of ISOs and well as the broader political context and relationships with other political actors. ISOs, however, may exercise a more subtle political impact by shaping specific citizenship ideas and practices among their members which are frequently overlooked by scholars and which are explored in this Chapter.

There are various academic approaches to studying ISOs from a political perspective which allow us to better understand the inner workings of such organisations, their place in society, interaction with other political actors, and grassroots support. A common approach is the ‘politics of the poor’. Membership-based ISOs with political agendas which employ advocacy as a method to defending and advancing interests of people in the informal sector are a relatively recent phenomenon and sometimes referred to as ‘membership-based organisations of the poor’ since poverty and economic informalisation are closely inked (Chen et al, 2006). The Indian Self-Employed Women’s Association established in the 1970s is arguably the most well-known example of such an organisation (Ibid.). However, Lindell (2010c) suggests that it is wrong to view ISOs as ‘organisations of the poor’ as they are multi-class entities. Indeed, there are different social groups and classes within such organisations, although in the case of Zimbabwe and ISOs studied in this Chapter, many ISO members (and most of my respondents) were poor and had precarious livelihoods. The ‘organisation’ component has also been questioned. Asef Bayat (1997a) suggests that the urban poor and destitute tend to employ the ‘quiet encroachment’ strategy for survival. This strategy involves a quiet and persistent advancement of poor people without any leadership or guidance. Bayat (1997b) suggests that the urban poor, including people in the informal sector, represent what he calls the ‘un-civil society’ in the sense that they lack modern forms of organisation (a characteristic of mainstream civil society) and use quiet and prolonged mobilisation techniques with sporadic social and political action.

The ‘politics of the poor’ approach is not suitable for studying the informal sector in Zimbabwe, firstly, because of Lindell’s (2010c) point that the informal sector is not a homogenous entity. Secondly, the informal sector in its entirety as well as individuals in the informal sector have been marginalised and stigmatised by the government, local authorities, and politicians not because they are poor but because they are informal and, hence, ‘un-modern’. Remarkably, almost none of my interviewees in 2016 and 2018, although they

complained extensively about financial hardships and lamented the devastating state of the economy, referred to themselves as ‘poor’. Third, the strategies adopted by informal sector actors in Harare were very different from what Bayat (1997a; 1997b) calls ‘quiet encroachment’ because ISOs played an important role in organising the informal sector unlike the urban poor in Egypt.

Zimbabwean ISOs can be placed between civil society and Bayat’s ‘un-civil society’ or political society. On the one hand, many of them are officially registered and recognised by other NGOs, local authorities and the government. On the other hand, many ISOs do not have an up-to-date members’ register, do not always maintain proper documentation, have irregular meetings, and their political actions may indeed be sporadic, limited, and driven by professional leaders who came to ISOs from other NGOs and political parties. Therefore, it is hard to categorise them and, analysing ISOs in Zimbabwe, it is important to see their activity within the broader political context. The nature of many economic activities of ISO members puts ISOs in a challenging position between mainstream civil society and un-civil society because individuals in the informal sector are often characterised as being ‘out of place’ in the ‘modern’ economic system, as we have seen in the widespread reproduction of a ‘modernist mindset’. Jeremy Jones (2014) called the shift to the informal sector Zimbabweans have experienced ‘displacement-in-place’. He points out (Jones, 2014, p. 213):

take vendors: exactly what socio-economic ‘place’ did they occupy before they were ‘displaced’ by the government [during Operation *Murambatsvina*]? Many, including those responsible for their eviction, would argue that the vendors had no rightful ‘place’ to start with. The ‘law’ was largely on the side of government with respect to home demolitions as well. How, then, are we to locate ‘illicit livelihoods’ vis-à-vis ‘licit’ ones (Kamete 2010; Roitman 2005)? What does it mean to be economically ‘in place’?

ISOs organise and address the issues of individuals who themselves can be seen as displaced *in situ* and have livelihoods that the government, local authorities, and law enforcement agencies do not always consider legal. This also places ISOs on the margins of mainstream civil society.

Attempts to categorise ISOs in developing countries (Carré et al, 2000) have proved to be challenging because of the versatility of multiple ISOs and their methods (Bonner, 2010). Some ISOs follow a trade union model, and because of that, are usually closely linked to trade unions while others act as loose networks. Indeed, the informal sector is usually hard to organise and deal with because of its natural characteristics, such as diversity of economic activities, spatial dispersion, lack of identifiable employers and competition among self-employed individuals (Devenish and Skinner, 2004), and trade union's engagement strategies have varied from antagonism to integration (Lindell, 2008, pp. 223–225).

Scholars have identified other challenges in informal sector organisation and mobilisation, such as a limited material and financial basis, lack of leadership skills, and insufficient political contacts and experience (Meagher, 2010; Mutillah, 2010; Jimu, 2010). The idea that the informal sector lacks organisational capacities because of its innate characteristics (Portes, 1989; Bayat, 2004) has been challenged by many scholars (Lindell, 2010b; Aragwala, 2013; Simone, 2013). Lindell (2010c, p. 2) suggests that collective organising and action has become more widespread in the informal sector in African countries and 'creates opportunities for the collective articulation of alternative discourses on the informal economy and of new visions for the city'. As AbdouMaliq Simone (2013, p. 259) explains, 'in environments where people's vulnerability can be manipulated and traded for political advantage, where divisions within localities can be easily cultivated, and where individual assets and capacities never are sufficient to change much of anything, collective solidarities are important instruments of diligence, focus, and step-by-step concrete change'.

Organising in the informal sector is also vital for making claims to citizenship and recognition by the state. One of the most common grounds for making a claim to full citizenship is taxation as a form of contribution of the informal sector to national economies, and this issue has been widely studied. As Ilda Lindell (2010b, p. 1) notes, 'our understanding of the politics of informality has been hampered by deeply entrenched views that tend to deprive people in

the informal economy of agency'. However, some scholars and international organisations have argued that the informal sector's contributions to national economies is significant, and therefore, the informal sector and people in the informal sector should be recognised by governments, involved in policy-making, decriminalised and receive social protection, i.e. receive treatment similar to that of the formal economic sector (Lund and Skinner, 1999; ILO, 2002). Scholars have argued that organising is crucial for individuals in the informal sector to challenge marginalising and unjust approaches of governments to the informal sector. For instance, Rina Aragwala (2013) studies informal workers' movements in India and suggests that the associational life of informal labourers allows them to dignify their discontent by holding the state (as the only actor responsible for their welfare) accountable and forcing it to recognise their contribution and satisfy their needs in exchange for the provision of unregulated labour and political support. Alison Brown (2015) looks at street trade in Tanzania and Senegal and the issue of collective property rights in the context of the urban informal sector and suggests that street vendors in Dakar managed to claim their right to the public space and employ it for their livelihood due to collective organisation, action, and political support for such collective action. By contrast, she suggests, in Dar es Salam informal sector actors did not succeed in organising and mobilising and because of that eventually were denied the right to occupy public space and were evicted (Ibid.).

Considering the scale of marginalisation of the informal sector in Harare, the political, social and cultural attitudes towards the informal sector as informed by the modernist mindset, and their repercussions for its visibility (see Chapter 2–4), the organisation of the sector may be crucial to shifting attitudes and eventually policies towards individuals in the informal sector and improving their work conditions and welfare.

Fragmentation of the informal sector and the heterogeneity of ISOs have been recognised by scholars as additional challenges. For instance, Ilda Lindell (2008b) looks at the distribution of power in an urban context, for instance between the state and civic groups and

among civic organisations and groups. She focuses on a vendors' association in Maputo, Mozambique, and suggests that it became a central site of governance acting as a market regulator, infrastructure provider, and vendors' representative. Despite its role in governance, the associations' relationship with the political elites was clientelist. Lindell notes that in that particular case, agency was exercised by the association's members both within the association and against the state. Not only that, but the association (as well as the informal sector in general) did not have a single collective identity and was heterogeneous since collective identities are typically shaped through complex interactions of class, gender and other social inequality categories. As she notes, 'unity, sameness and difference are... not given but actively constructed, as organised "informals" build and demolish boundaries of belonging' (Lindell, 2010b, p. 217).

There are also variations in collective identities, senses of belonging, and political identities across the ISO spectrum which have not been studied. There are differences in the notions of citizenship and attitudes and relationship to the government and local authorities among the ISOs considered in this Chapter. This leads me to the argument beyond Ilda Lindell's suggestion that collective and political identities are multiple because the membership of ISOs is multi-class. I suggest that ISOs, i.e. their activities, leadership, organisational structure, partners, and the environment in which they work, play a major role in shaping the collective identities and ideas about citizenship among their members. Associational life in the informal sector is highly heterogeneous and is influenced by a number of factors, such as historically shaped ideas and practices of citizenship and institutions, the broad political and economic conditions, organisational characteristics of ISOs, and their relationships with other civic and political actors.

§3. THE SPECTRUM OF INFORMAL SECTOR ORGANISATIONS AND COLLECTIVE IDENTITIES IN HARARE

Collective identity (with reference to social movements) has been defined as ‘an interactive and shared definition produced by several individuals... and concerned with the orientations of action and the field of opportunities and constraints in which the action takes place’ (Mellucci, 1995, p. 44). Alberto Mellucci (1995) suggests that collective identity implies shared goals, means, and fields of action, and active relationships and interaction between members, and emotional involvement which forms the sense of common unity. All these features are present in Zimbabwean ISOs. As Sonia Kruks (2001, p. 85) notes, identity politics is different from the kinds of politics not grounded in collective identities and what makes it distinct is ‘its demand for recognition on the basis of the very grounds on which recognition has previously been denied: it is qua women, qua blacks, qua lesbians that groups demand recognition’. In Harare’s informal sector, people demand recognition, respect, and dignified treatment from the authorities on the basis of their involvement in informal economic activities as a primary source of livelihood. However, I suggest that it is hard to talk about a common collective identity of people in the informal sector partly because of the absence of worker identity (see Chapter 3). Distinct collective identities in different ISOs are shaped in the course of training, the interaction of members and leaders and collective action, and on the basis of these collective identities, specific ideas about citizenship and practices of lived citizenship are shaped.

The overall tendency in the informal sector across developing countries has been towards the increase in the number and scale of ISOs. In many countries, e.g. in Kenya, Tanzania, Peru, and India, organisations were created at the national level (ILO, 2007; Mutillah, 2010; Brown and Lyons, 2010). Some organisations expanded to cover entire regions (Nchito and Hansen, 2010) or united and formed international informal sector networks, for

instance, an international alliance of street vendors StreetNet International or Women in Informal Employment: Globalising and Organising (Lindell, 2010b).

Similar tendencies occurred in Zimbabwe. As economic informalisation was expanding, ISOs mushroomed to represent the interests of people in the informal sector. Over the years, the associational life of the urban informal sector in Zimbabwe became diverse in scope, organisation and form, as well as fragmented. To begin with, there are ISOs that are officially registered, for instance, the Glenview Informal Sector Association, NAVUZ, ZISO, ZCIEA, Vendors' Initiative for Social and Economic Transformation (VISET) (Interviews with Tungamirai Madzokere, 27 July 2016; with Value Mgagara, James Munemo and Henry Kane, 2 August 2016; with Promise Mkwanzani, 30 July 2016; with Wisborn Malaya, 28 July 2016; with Samuel Wadzai, 11 August 2016). Due to their legal status, such ISOs have greater opportunities when identifying civil society and business partners and donors, defending the rights of their members, and representing their interests (Ibid.). Unregistered ISOs often have different goals. For example, street vendors in Newlands, Harare, formed an unregistered association to maintain order in the area where they vended and avoid accusations of misdemeanour and petty crimes as the police viewed them as suspicious (Interview with Evan, 14 August 2016).

Furthermore, ISOs operate on different levels. Local ISOs are often founded with the assistance of local councillors, like the Glenview Informal Sector Association (Interview with Tungamirai Madzokere, 27 July 2016) or Mabvuku–Tafara Traders' Organisation (Interview with Joseph Rose, 2 September 2016). They hold regular meetings and maintain a close relationship with local councillors working to improve conditions of the informal sector in their neighbourhoods and resolve individual issues (Interview with Tungamirai Madzokere, 27 July 2016; with Aaron Nyabanda, 27 July 2016; with Kissmore, 29 August 2016; with David, 27 July 2016; with Charles Chidagu, 29 August 2016; with Joseph Rose, 2 September 2016; with Alisen Moffat, 7 September 2016; with Barnabas Ndira, 2 September 2016). Councillors may

help ISO members with individual problems, for example, when someone was overcharged for a market stall (Interview with Hilary, 3 September 2016), or help an ISO receive a site to create a market (Interview with Joseph Rose, 2 September 2016; with Spiwe Guwa, 2 September 2016), although their resources are limited. ISOs may also be formed via the self-organisation of informal sector workers in a particular area or market, like the Glenview Flea Market Association (Interview with Tungamirai Madzokere, 27 July 2016). Local ISOs may be used for political patronage, especially in townships and constituencies with the tough political competition. As my informant explained, when a Zimbabwe African National Union–Patriotic Front (ZANU–PF) supporter approached the Glenview Informal Sector Association with a problem, such as access to market stalls, the solution of her/his problem could be impeded by the organisation as Glenview was Movement for Democratic Change–Tsvangirai (MDC–T) dominated, and the local councillor was from the MDC (Interview with Anna, 27 July 2016). But local ISOs may be effective in terms of social and political mobilisation since they have closer contact with people on the ground (Interview with Fortune Gwaze, 3 August 2016). National ISOs cover (or at least claim to cover) several towns or even rural areas (Interview with Value Mgagara, James Munemo and Henry Kane, 2 August 2016; with Promise Mkwanzani, 30 July 2016; Wisborn Malaya, 28 July 2016). They have the more ambitious goals of representing and defending the rights of informal sector actors than local ISOs (Ibid.).

In addition, ISOs differ in terms of their relationship with political parties. Many ISOs, like the ones considered in this Chapter, seek to maintain an ‘apolitical’ standing. It is clear that the informal sector is incredibly politicised and because of this, all ISOs can be seen as political actors. In the Zimbabwean context, when people or organisations claim that they are ‘apolitical’, it means that they are non-partisan and are not directly affiliated with any political party. ISOs can also be directly or indirectly affiliated with political parties. For example, the most well-known pro-ZANU–PF ISO is the Grassroots Empowerment [Flea Market Trust and] Association which became visible from 2015 when its members resisted evictions sanctioned by

the City Council and threatened to sabotage the ruling party in the 2018 elections for withdrawing the promised support under the economic empowerment slogan (see Matenga and Nyavaya, 2015). As the Director of the Zimbabwe Democracy Institute Pedzisai Ruhanya (Interview, 28 July 2016) noted, ‘the fragmentation of the political parties also cascades to the fragmentation of the informal sector’. This distinction is problematic as most ISOs claim to be ‘apolitical’ and independent from any political party. After 2013, at the end of the Government of National Unity (GNU) and in the context of further economic decay, non-partisan ISOs came to play an essential role as representatives of the informal sector in a non-partisan manner and as actors that shaped specific notions of citizenship among their members.

An important question arises regarding ISOs and collective identities in the informal sector: if most (particularly individual and small-scale) informal sector actors are marginalised, stigmatised, and oppressed, why is there no massive ‘passive networking’³¹ (to use Asef Bayat’s [2010; see also Bayat, 1997b; 2000] terminology), no single common collective identity and, as a result of these, no united organisation or network that would represent all informal sector actors? I suggest that it is the top-down politicisation of the informal sector (of trading space, marketplaces, cross-border trade, transport, and housing), the existence of partisan patronage networks (such as Chipangano in Mbare, or pro-ZANU–PF ISOs, which essentially act as institutionalised forms of patronage), the distrust of some organisations in the informal sector (that might extract money from members or use them for political purposes), and the lack of worker identity in the informal sector (see Chapter 3) which make people form robust collective identities within ISOs they have joined rather than the informal sector as a whole, and it is on the basis of these collective identities that specific notions of citizenship are shaped and practised.

It is also crucial to remember that all developments in the vision, understanding, ideas, and practices of informal sector actors’ citizenship are constructed and experienced in particular

³¹ The word ‘passive’ does not have a negative connotation here.

spaces – physical, political, economic and social. Lived citizenship is inseparable from these spaces. I argue that the Central Business District (CBD) environment was central to the explanation of NAVUZ’s activity. ZISO and ZCIEA members usually operated from townships where space was less hostile to the informal sector, hence, their activities, methods, and actions differed from those of NAVUZ’s CBD street vendors.

The nexus between the informal sector and urban space (both physical and political) allows us to talk about the ‘street politics’ in which individual informal sector actors and ISOs have engaged. NAVUZ arose as the only ISO out of three I studied that used the mechanisms of street politics. Asef Bayat (2000, p. 551) indicates that street politics is ‘a set of conflicts and the attendant implications between a collective populace and the authorities, which are shaped and expressed episodically in the social and physical space of the “streets”’. Street politics, he suggests, occurs outside representative and civil society institutions and represents the discontent of certain groups while lacking a clear ideology, agenda or leadership (Bayat, 2000). In the case of Harare’s informal sector, the existence of ISOs which organised and mobilised people in the informal sector (especially in the case of NAVUZ as we will see below) allowed ISO leaders and civic activists to frame unsystematic and sometimes chaotic interests and agendas of individual informal sector actors and represent them as collective. Via ISOs, their (street) politics became constructive and allowed them to reclaim space within the CBD and so their right to the city. Bayat (2000; 2010) also notes that it is ‘passive networking’ which allows for street politics to emerge, i.e. when individuals have a shared collective identity based on the space they occupy (for instance, a market or a street corner). This, however, had significant limitations in Harare’s context which was politically polarised and where political and civic affiliations played a crucial role in one’s relationship with the government, parties, organisations, militia groups, and other individuals. Owing to this, I suggest that street politics ISOs engaged in was limited and should be read only in the context of contesting the urban space by particular groups.

ISOs in Zimbabwe may also be partly viewed as political communities within political society. As mentioned above, they occupy space on the margin between civil and ‘un-civil’ society. Partha Chatterjee (2004) proposes the political society framework for the analysis of the politics of marginalised groups, distinguishing it from more conventional civil society politics. He suggests that ‘many of these groups, organised into associations, transgress the strict lines of legality in struggling to live and work’ (Chatterjee, 2004, p. 36). ‘These groups’, Chatterjee argues (2004, p. 40), ‘... accept that their activities are often illegal and contrary to good civic behaviour, but they make a claim to a habitation and a livelihood as a matter of right....’ However, due to the inability of the government to implement welfare programmes and attend to the entire population which is capable of making claims to welfare programmes, ‘[for the state agencies] to treat those claims as rights would only invite further violation of public property and civic laws’ (Ibid). I would argue that ISOs in Zimbabwe represent the political society of the informal sector using established civil society forms of organisation, funding, and methods (training, advocacy, petitions and protests) since they represent the masses of marginalised urban informal sector who hustle trying to survive and do not always comply with Harare City Council’s by-laws which regulate street vending. This is also linked to the construction of citizenship such that informal sector workers are marginalised and not viewed as ‘proper’ citizens of Zimbabwe since their activity is perceived by the government, local authorities, political parties, and even informal sector actors themselves as undesirable and, at times, illegal, as explored in previous Chapters.

ZCIEA, NAVUZ and ZISO were three major ISOs around 2016–2017 and were crucial for the organisation and representation of the informal sector in Harare. The context in which they emerged, the motivations for their establishment, and their mobilisation capacities varied significantly. Contrary to a widespread view that the informal sector lacks leadership capacities and organisational resources (Bayat, 2004), these examples show that successful

organisation in the informal sector is possible and important for the representation of individuals in the informal sector.

ZCIEA is the eldest ISO considered here – it was formed in 2002 when the Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions (ZCTU) united 22 informal economy associations to represent and amplify their voice (Interview with Wisborn Malaya, 28 July 2016), as discussed in the previous chapter. ZCIEA Secretary-General Wisborn Malaya said it had 177,000 ‘dormant’ members who joined but did not pay membership fees and 11,000 ‘active’ members in 2016. ZCIEA’s activities included legal assistance, funeral policy, and workshops on business, financial literacy, lobbying and advocacy, socioeconomic rights, constitutional awareness, and collective bargaining (Ibid.). As members emphasised, ‘being given education’ was one of the main advantages of ZCIEA (Interview with Alice, 17 August 2016; with James, 28 August 2016). Rose, a ZCIEA member, explained: ‘It is actually easier to do business after these workshops because some people start [business] with no vision, but they [workshops] actually give us insight about what business is’ (Interview with Rose, 19 August 2016).

ZCIEA was a bureaucratised, multi-level, and centralised organisation represented all over the country. New members were usually recruited through personal networks of current members (Interview with Alice, 17 August 2016; with Charity Mandishona, 13 March 2018). ZCIEA worked with organisations that supported labour movements, such as the International Labour Organisation (ILO), the Southern African Trade Union Coordination Council, the Norwegian People’s Aid, the Solidarity Centre, and StreetNet International (ZCIEA, n.d.; interview with Wisborn Malaya, 24 August 2016). Funding came from some of these organisations, for instance, from the Netherlands Trade Union Confederation and from the Danish trade unions through the ZCTU (Interview with Wisborn Malaya, 28 July 2016; with Nyasha Muchichwa, 17 August 2016).³²

³² I was not able to access any financial documents or written data on donor funding of any ISO. I did not find any evidence of either extensive donor funding of the three ISOs or tough competition among them for financial resources.

ZCIEA's identity was originally linked to the ZCTU, and ZCIEA members described themselves as a family (Interview with William, 22 August 2016; with Holly, 22 August 2016). When I was added to the ZCIEA WhatsApp group, a member messaged me and introduced himself as 'ZCIEA family'. ZCIEA member Rose also said, 'ZCIEA, the people, they are like a family to me'. Such language is not common for ISOs but has been used to describe belonging to a trade union (see Lazar, 2013). Moreblessing (Interview, 1 May 2018), a cross border trader, explained her experience:

I just like ZCIEA. In ZCIEA, we are a family, we are just one big family because it covers the whole country. I just go to Mutare, I feel at home because I have a 'relative' there, I cross Kariba, and I feel safe because I have accommodation there... we help each other very much.

In the interviews, ZCIEA members presented themselves as a united community similar to a trade union. For instance, Alice told me that when her daughter was injured in a road accident in Bulawayo, someone from ZCIEA shared this information through their WhatsApp group, and members in Bulawayo helped her (Interview with Alice, 17 August 2016).

NAVUZ was established in 2008 and registered in 2014. It aimed at lobbying and advocating for the informal sector, providing legal support and social safety nets, strengthening vendors' capacities, and enhancing vendors' participation in national policy and legislative processes (Interview with Value Mgagara, James Munemo and Henry Kane, 2 August 2016; with Sten Zvorwadza, 12 August 2016; NAVUZ, n.d.). NAVUZ Chairperson Sten Zvorwadza (Interview, 12 August 2016) explained: 'we insist that our members participate in political issues because the outcome of the elections will define whether they remain in the streets or not'. It had a developed structure of street committees in Harare and a chapter in Bulawayo (Interview with Value Mgagara, James Munemo and Henry Kane, 2 August 2016; with Olivia Chikunichawa, 22 August 2016). As a lot of activity of NAVUZ took place in the CBD and concerned problems of CBD vendors, a significant part of organising happened through the streets and sites where vending took place (but also *WhatsApp* and personal networks). NAVUZ claimed it had 54,000 members (10,000 in Harare) (NAVUZ, n.d.). Its activities included a litter

monitoring campaign, a housing scheme, and training in business, socio-economic and constitutional rights as well as medical and legal assistance through partners (Interview with Olivia Chikunichawa, 22 August 2016; with Maria, 1 September 2016). Kudakwashe, a NAVUZ member, said that NAVUZ provided food for his family when the police arrested him, which was also a common form of assistance (Interview with Kudakwashe, 1 September 2016). Similar to ZCIEA, NAVUZ had partners among NGOs. For instance, the Zimbabwe Lawyers for Human Rights provided legal assistance and training on constitutional rights (Interview with Dzimbabwe Chimbga, 24 August 2016; with Olivia Chikunichawa, 22 August 2016). The Counselling Services Unit provided counselling and medical assistance to all people who faced violence and worked with all three organisations considered here (Interview with Zachariah Godi, 18 August 2016). NAVUZ worked on anti-corruption issues with Transparency International Zimbabwe as its ‘major role is to look at the issues of governance in the informal sector’ (Interview with Danai Mabuto-Kudya, 8 September 2016). Linkages with residents’ associations allowed NAVUZ to work through their community structures (Interview with Marvellous Kumalo, 30 August 2016; with Simbarashe Moyo, 5 September 2016). NAVUZ received a grant from the Zimbabwe Coalition for Debt and Development (Interview with Olivia Chikunichawa, 22 August 2016; with Confidence Tendai Bobo, 5 September 2016) and was still in the process of fundraising during my research (Interview with Value Mgagara, James Munemo and Henry Kane, 2 August 2016).

There was an impressive level of loyalty and solidarity within NAVUZ. Sten Zvorwadza built a direct and close relationship with NAVUZ members. The notion of a ‘vendor’ is usually associated with poverty and survival, but Zvorwadza identified himself as such despite coming from a better economic background than NAVUZ members: he studied in the United Kingdom and worked in the banking sphere (Vikilahle, 2016), but during the economic crisis became a successful paraffin supplier (Interview with Sten Zvorwadza, 30 August 2016). His public self-identification as a ‘vendor’ resonated with NAVUZ members and facilitated the creation of a

close-knit community. Indeed, NAVUZ members admired Zvorwadza: ‘His last name, Zvorwadza, means “painful”, and he does feel the pain of the people.... He is being convicted because he wants people to survive and eat well’ (Interview with Kudakwashe, 1 September 2016). Some recalled that he helped them personally: ‘I was even beaten in 2015 and they [the municipal police] even arrested me because they said I was a touter... and Sten Zvorwadza stood for us, he assigned lawyers to [represent] us’ (Interview with Herbert, 9 May 2018). A group of members also fundraised and sewed outfits with ‘NAVUZ’ written on the front and ‘Zvorwadza’ on the back (see Figure 8; Interview with Abigail, 1 September 2016). Members of NAVUZ expressed collective solidarity, for instance, by saying that ‘even if you are weak, you can stand for yourself’, and stressed that supporting each other was vital (Ibid.; interview with Abigail, 1 September 2016; with Maria, 1 September 2016). For example, when someone’s market stall was overtaken, they united to fight back since ‘if you don’t have big muscles, you won’t survive’ (Interview with John, 1 September 2016; with George, NAVUZ member, 1 September 2016).



Figure 8. A member of NAVUZ showing her uniform with 'NAVUZ' embroidered on the chest and 'Zvorwadza' on the back. Source: Kristina Pikoškaia (2016).

ZISO was the youngest ISO of the three considered here. It was established in 2012 to enhance legal representation, organisation and advocacy for the informal sector. Its leader, Promise Mkwanzani, said it had a 'huge membership' – over 200,000 people in Zimbabwe (Interview with Promise Mkwanzani, 30 July 2016) which was likely an exaggeration, taking into account the numbers of ZCIEA and NAVUZ. ZISO worked with the International Youth Foundation and Norwegian People's Aid (Ibid.). It had programmes to develop the employability and entrepreneurship skills of its members (Interview with Tererai Obey Sithole, 5 August 2016). ZISO members attended entrepreneurship programmes arranged by the Boost Fellowship, an organisation that encouraged entrepreneurship, and the Barclays Incubation Programme and found them useful for their businesses (Interview with Mairos Masamba, 15 August 2016, with Rudo Chafa, 5 September 2016)). Molly, a ZISO member, explained what she learned: 'previously I did not know how to keep the money. I could sell something and

spend everything on sweets for my children. But now I know I should have two different budgets – for my family and for my business, and this way, I will grow my business’ (Interview with Molly, 16 August 2016). Wellington, another member, also indicated that joining ZISO had a positive impact on his life: ‘from the time we joined ZISO, it mentored us about how to run a business. That’s the major thing we got from ZISO. I appreciate what it has done in my life’ (Interview with Wellington, 16 August 2016).

ZISO community was based upon the notions of entrepreneurship and business development, and members of ZISO identified themselves as ‘businessmen/women’ whether they engaged in farming, cross-border trade, street vending, or small-scale production. This contrasted with NAVUZ, which reclaimed the term ‘vendor’. For example, Molly who engaged in street vending and hawking without a particular specialisation was proud to call herself a businesswoman (Interview with Molly, 16 August 2016). Other ZISO members were willing to talk explicitly about their businesses and demonstrate their products. They used ZISO as a platform for networking and marketing (Ibid.; interview with Wellington, 16 August 2016; with Glenda, 16 August 2016; with Hazel, 16 August 2016).

Finally, it is important to note that although these ISOs claim to be apolitical (non-partisan), some of their leaders have a political and partisan background. While ZCIEA may be seen as a product of the ZCTU’s adaptation to economic informalisation with its leader entering ZCIEA’s leadership position through the ZCTU and not having a strong personal partisan background (despite the ZCTU’s early linkages with the MDC), NAVUZ and ZISO were established by former opposition politicians, Sten Zvorwadza and Promise Mkwanzani respectively, who saw gaps in the representation of the informal sector and, having left the MDC–T, channelled their activity into the informal sector. Mkwanzani started his civic and political activism career as the president of the Zimbabwe National Students’ Union (ZINASU) in 2006–2007 which was one of the founders of the MDC. Later, he joined the MDC’s national executive committee as the secretary for youth until 2014 when he was expelled for calling for

the MDC's renowned leader, Morgan Tsvangirai, to resign (Muzulu, 2014). Sten Zvorwadza (NAVUZ) said he grew up in the 'royal family' of Pauline Zvorwadza 'who sits on the highest board in ZANU-PF', Teresa Makoni, 'a senior MDC member', and his 'late brother Paddington who was the first Member of Parliament in Rushinga in the 1980s' (Machakaire, 2016). In 2013, he aspired to be the MDC-T Member of Parliament for Mbare constituency but lost the primaries to Eric Knight (*Bulawayo24*, 2013). Despite these linkages and experiences of the ISO leaders, they maintained a non-partisan approach while working with the informal sector, which seems to be a strategic move. As Zvorwadza indicated, he left the MDC-T since his partisan preferences could interfere with his activity in NAVUZ (Vikilahle, 2016). Taking into account the history of political violence in Zimbabwe and the strong association of NGOs with the political opposition, in distancing themselves from political parties ISO leaders may also seek to protect their members from being victimised and further excluded by the state and the ruling party.

In sum, associational life in the informal sector is both possible and important in urban Zimbabwe. The three ISOs differed significantly in terms of their activities, approaches to the informal sector, strategies of engaging with informal sector issues, and the features that were valued within every organisation. These characteristics mattered when ISOs were engaging with political actors and combating the marginality of the informal sector. In the case of the ISOs considered here, the notion of collective identity is central to the understanding of what ideas about citizenship they shaped among their members, through which activities, and what kind of attitudes and relationship they have with key political actors, such as the government, local authorities, parties and protest movements. As I will show, the impact that ISOs and associational life have on informal sector actors in general are crucial to the ideas of citizenship that may be shaped in the informal sector.

Being placed in a hostile political and economic environment within which they were marginalised, ISO members engaged in self-formation as citizens through interactions with each other, ISO leaders, and partners. ISO activities, relations with the state, and approaches to informal sector problems demonstrated their preference for everyday survival politics, i.e. small-scale grassroots non-governmental political actions in which people engaged for survival (Morris-Suzuki, 2013) as discussed in Chapter 4. These strategies influenced ISO members to become citizens who did not need to rely on the authorities. At the same time, the notions and practices of citizenship differed in the three ISOs and were grounded in their collective identities. I recognise that people's practices of lived citizenship may differ in different social and political contexts depending on how they act, for instance, as residents, party supporters, or participants of protest movements. I attempted to focus on the impact of ISOs on lived citizenship of their members related to their informal sector activities.

Firstly, ISOs and especially their members seemed to be interested in minimising the state's intervention in the informal sector (at least before the November 2017 coup) as it was often damaging, consisting of, for instance, the relocation of vendors, limitation of imports, or clear-up campaigns. Secondly, they did not believe that local councillors could help solve their problems and did not believe in their capacities: 'we go to councillors and tell them about problems, but they do not go further' (Interview with Stanelake Nyakudya and Lucia Chinyamakobvu, 18 August 2016). Most ISO members interviewed did not believe that local councillors could help them sufficiently: 'most of these councillors – once they are elected, they are gone for good. They are approachable, but not enough. It is because of the bureaucratic process' (Interview with James, 28 August 2016). Thirdly, they thought that political parties abused the informal sector by developing exclusive and violent patronage networks (Interview with John, 1 September 2016) and criticised the lack of meaningful engagement of authorities and political parties with the informal sector: 'those MDC councillors are corrupt... Chamisa

must come to us... so that we could tell him what the situation of the ground [is]' (Interview with Vimbai, Chiedza, Tichaona and Israel Mabhoo, 20 April 2018). However, after the coup many actors, including ISOs expected improvements in the issues of governance and approach of authorities to the informal sector and ISOs encouraged their members to participate in governance more (Interview with Wisborn Malaya, 17 January 2018).

All these factors made ISOs turn to 'survival politics' (see Chapter 4). For example, since the state provided limited opportunities for micro-credit, ISOs established internal revolving funds, with members contributing a small amount of money that would then be given to a member to develop her/his business. ZCIEA members, however, noted that few people could meet the financial commitment and it took long time to distribute the funds (Ibid.; interview with Holly, 22 August 2016). NAVUZ also stopped this practice when some members disappeared after receiving the money from the revolving fund (Interview with Netsai, 1 September 2016). Other forms of survival politics involved funeral schemes, wherein ISOs partnered with burial organisations to spread the cost of burial across a specific term or when members fundraised to assist with funerals (NAVUZ, n.d.; interview, Kudakwashe, 1 September 2016; with Alice, 17 August 2016; see also NAVUZ, 2016b). ISO members engaged in survival politics when they united to confront patronage networks and fought back to access their market stalls, as NAVUZ members did (Interview with John, 1 September 2016). For example, the Copacabana market was one of the few designated sites in the CBD for the fruit and vegetable market. Several NAVUZ fruit and vegetable vendors registered with the Council and obtained stalls there (Interview with Kudakwashe, 1 September 2016). However, as they explained, a pro-ZANU–PF Grassroots Empowerment Association captured the Copacabana market and gave stalls to its members who sold clothes and other goods. For a while, they enjoyed protection from the municipal police who did not relocate them. In such cases, NAVUZ members had to physically fight for their stalls or share the space at the market (Interview with John, 1 September 2016).

In some instances, ISOs attempted to return to governmental politics as they demanded a more humane and respectful approach to the informal sector from the authorities. NAVUZ was the most successful. As Pedzisai Ruhanya stated, ‘this group is a very significant grouping in terms of popularisation of the politics of dissent.... They are coming out straight, get arrested, go to court, challenge, and on the following day, they come back again’ (Interview with Pedzisai Ruhanya, 28 July 2016). Many members were proud that they participated in NAVUZ protests and stood for their rights (Interview with Mairos, 1 September 2016; with Abigail, 1 September 2016). Some also indicated that they were not mobilised to participate in protests but organised protests themselves (Interview with Kudakwashe, 1 September 2016). Members of NAVUZ were proud of what they achieved in the CBD: ‘through civic education that we got from NAVUZ and with the help of lawyers, we can now sue the Council if they harass us.... Of course, the police can use force to arrest us, but they are afraid because we can sue them’ (Interview with Maria, 1 September 2016). John, a NAVUZ Harare CBD chairperson, was especially proud of his and NAVUZ’s achievements in protecting members from police harassment: ‘there are people who are not members of NAVUZ, and their goods are taken, but [the municipal police] know that these people from NAVUZ are a no-go area.... The police even know my post in the CBD – they call me “Chairman, Chairman!”’ (Interview with John, 1 September 2016).

NAVUZ preferred to participate in protests they organised, for example, against relocation of vendors (*Nehanda Radio*, 2016a), rather than to join popular protests, such as #Tajamuka or #ThisFlag, although NAVUZ eventually supported some #Tajamuka protests in 2017 (Ndlovu, 2017). NAVUZ leaders and members said that NAVUZ protests were a part of the vendors’ agenda (Interview with Innocent, 1 September 2016; with Abigail, 1 September 2016; with John, 1 September 2016), but at a closer look, their agenda was much broader. For example, NAVUZ protested against vice president Mphoko’s stay in the Rainbow Towers Hotel in June 2016 (*New Zimbabwe*, 2016). They argued that Mphoko was wasting taxpayers’

money which could be used to improve roads and infrastructure (Interview with Innocent, 1 September 2016; with Abigail, 1 September 2016; with John, 1 September 2016). Another example is the protests of NAVUZ against the prohibition of public demonstrations in September 2016 (*Nehanda Radio*, 2016b; *263Chat*, 2016). This agenda was related more to civic and political rights rather than vendors' rights specifically, which is not surprising: given the scope of economic informalisation, almost every issue can be interpreted as related to people's livelihoods. Respondents indicated that they benefitted significantly from legal training and were aware of their civic rights (Interview with Innocent, 1 September 2016; with Kudakwashe, 1 September 2016; with Abigail, 1 September 2016; with John, 1 September 2016). The legal training carried out by NAVUZ was a major factor that enabled active political participation of vendors in politics and incentivised them to become and behave like active citizens who are unafraid to stand up for themselves both individually and as a group, confront the authorities, voice their dissent, and defend their rights not only as vendors but also as rights-bearing citizens.

Several reasons explain why the political activity, experiences of political participation, and active citizenship practices of NAVUZ members were different from ZISO and ZCIEA members and why NAVUZ was the most 'politically potent' of all three, to use Promise Mkwanzani's description (Interview with Promise Mkwanzani, 30 July 2016). Firstly, the most visible and extensive part of NAVUZ activity took place in the CBD (see Figure 9). Space (physical, political and social) in which citizenship is practised and experienced is vital to the understanding of ISOs. Vendors in the CBD fought for their vending space, faced the confiscation of goods, political patronage, bribery, harassment by the municipal police, hostile approach from the local authorities, and financial hardship (Interview with Innocent, 1 September 2016; with Netsai, 1 September 2016; with John, 1 September 2016). Informal sector actors in townships faced primarily financial problems (Interview with Holly, 22 August 2016; with William, 22 August 2016). In the CBD, the grievances of the informal sector were amplified, and this environment prompted vendors to mobilise effectively to stand for their

rights. Secondly, NAVUZ had a charismatic leader and was not prone to internal conflicts since its structure was straightforward, simple, and flexible. NAVUZ's heavy presence at the 'street' level made it easy to mobilise people and spread ideas. These factors may explain why NAVUZ was the most willing and capable of demanding political change for the informal sector and why ZISO and ZCIEA were less active in pursuing political change.

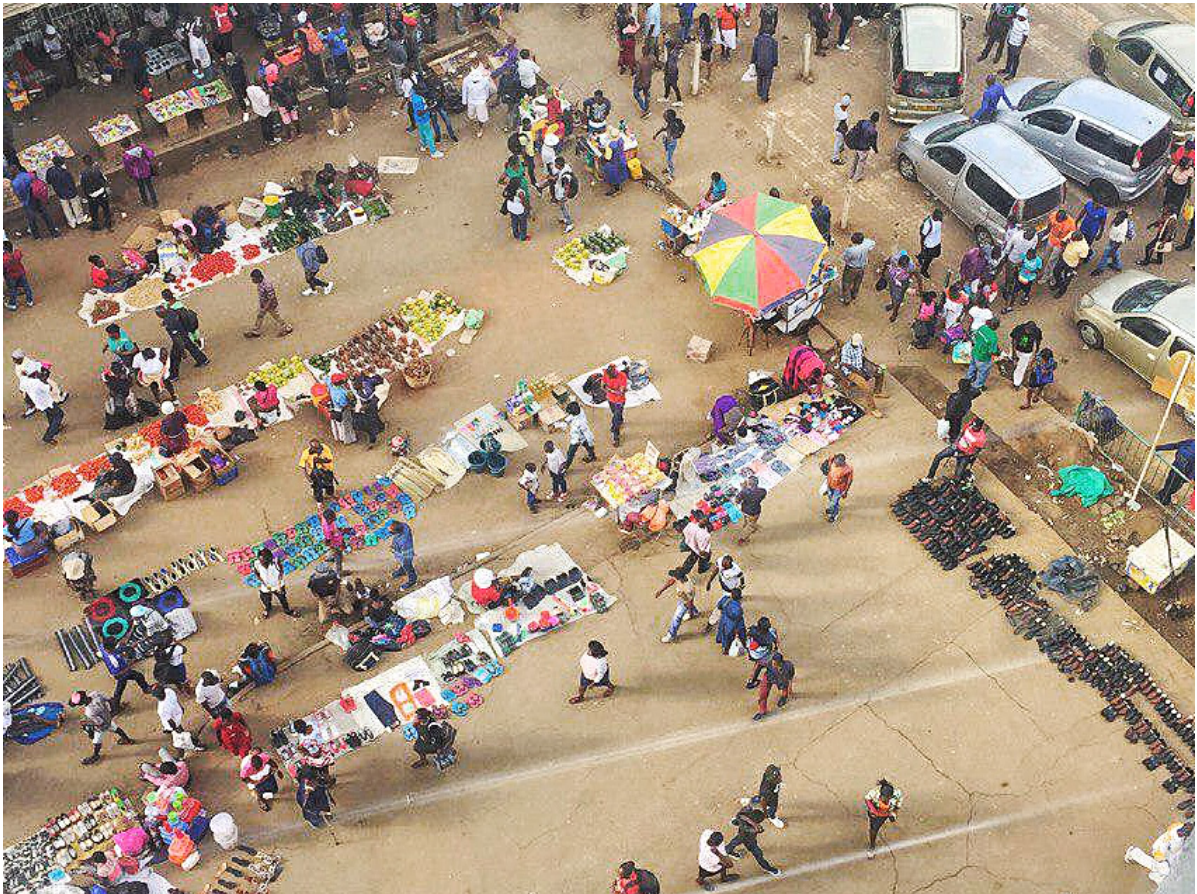


Figure 9. *Unregistered informal economic activities in the area between the Town House and Cleveland House (where the Department of Works, City Planning and Development is located) on the way from the city centre to Copacabana bus terminus: street vendors selling fruit and vegetables, clothes and shoes as well as mshikashika (unregistered taxis). Source: Kristina Pikovskaia (2018).*

Due to the differences in ISOs' activities, sites of operation, and methods, there was a spectrum of ideas about citizenship: on the one hand, there were politically empowered citizens of NAVUZ who actively combated their marginalisation as vendors, on the other hand, there were less politically active members of ZISO and ZCIEA who did not raise the discourses of constitutional rights or actively confront the authorities and marginalisation of the informal

sector. ZCIEA's political participation was limited compared to that of NAVUZ. Although ZCIEA petitioned the government on several occasions regarding the issues pertinent to informal sector actors (*ZimEye*, 2015), during my 2016 fieldwork, ZCIEA members barely expressed their attitude to the government, local authorities, political parties, and protest movements. Members largely viewed themselves as powerless in the face of the state and local authorities. While older members of ZCIEA felt that its power was 'transferred' from the ZCTU (Interview with Alice, 17 August 2016; with William, 22 August 2016), younger members were dissatisfied with their lack of representation and the extensive bureaucratisation of ZCIEA: 'they need to [simplify procedures] to represent us better' (Interview with James, 28 August 2016). ZCIEA members engaged mainly in survival politics to sustain a living (Interview with William, 22 August 2016; with Holly, 22 August 2016; with Rose, 19 August 2016) and usually adapted to government policies rather than actively seeking to transform them or demand political rights. This approach may be explained by the fact that ZCIEA was the product of the adaptation of the ZCTU to a rapidly changing economic environment and its loss of influence. Attempting to preserve the social mobilisation capacity in the politically contested environment, ZCIEA preserved a non-partisan approach (Interview with Wisborn Malaya, 28 July 2016) which may have led to the curtailed political participation of their members.

The political agency of ZISO members was limited in different ways. Since ZISO did not have any activities involving their members besides business training, the political activity of the organisation was visible only through its legal practices, for example when ZISO's leader, Promise Mkwanzani, filed cases against the government to defend the rights of people working informally (see Mbanje, 2015; Samukange, 2015a). This was problematic since he claimed to represent the organisation, but none of the members I interviewed mentioned any meetings to discuss ZISO's activities besides business training. It was unclear if ZISO could or intended to be as politically active as NAVUZ, but the disconnection between the leadership and members was a major factor that limited the political participation of ZISO members.

As explored in earlier Chapters, the informal sector has been perceived by the government and local authorities as undesirable. It has been stigmatised as disorganised, unlawful, fluid, filthy, and even threatening public health during cholera and typhoid outbreaks (see *Herald*, 2017a). In the course of combating marginalisation, besides stimulating everyday survival responses among their members, ISOs have shaped distinctive notions of citizenship due to the specific characters of ISOs and their methods of engaging with (or disengaging from) the state.

ZCIEA's mission was stated as 'alleviating poverty through transformation of informal economy activities into the mainstream activities' (ZCIEA, n.d., p. 4). ZCIEA benefitted from its linkages with the ZCTU and its bureaucratisation, international connections, and perception by foreign actors (see, for instance, TUC, 2010; House of Commons, 2010). While as an organisation ZCIEA was recognised by the authorities, many ZCIEA members felt neglected by the government and local authorities. Rose, a member of ZCIEA, said that she never contacted local councillors: 'we do not have a place or organisation we can go to get real help. At the end of the day, it is no use even if we go to the local authorities because they have no time to help us out because we always complain, every day' (Interview with Rose, 19 August 2016).

By expressing their dissatisfaction with being under-represented, ZCIEA members engaged in articulating a discourse of the informal sector deserving of the treatment that the formal sector received from the authorities. This reflected the linkage between ZCIEA and ZCTU and was expressed in many ways, such as people expecting protection from ZCIEA similar to that offered by the ZCTU to its members, a desire to possess documents and certificates which would prove their membership and accomplishments, and a desire to have a coherent emotional entity, a 'family', within the informal sector. Some members believed that, similarly to the ZCTU, ZCIEA could offer protection, for example, when a ZCIEA member was harassed by the police or when her/his rights were violated (Interview with Alice, 17 August

2016). As Golden Kofa (Interview, 25 August 2016), ZCIEA's National Information Officer, said,

we hope to go in that direction [so that ZCIEA membership cards provide protection].... We have engaged local authorities, ZIMRA [Zimbabwe Revenue Authority] officers, the banks, and ZRP [Zimbabwe Republican Police] people, and when we are talking like this, we understand each other well, but when we come back to our areas of work, the similar thing continues.

In 2016, ZCIEA temporarily stopped issuing membership cards since they wanted to modify them (Ibid.; Interview with Wisborn Malaya, 24 August 2016), but some members were concerned as they expected protection from ZCIEA. ZCIEA member Alice was worried: 'if something happens, I do not have anything to prove that I am a ZCIEA member. And they [the police] come to me or anything... I could just show my card... and they would leave me. We just want our cards' (Interview with Alice, 17 August 2016). This was a cry for being protected and represented in a trade-union manner.

In parallel with trade unions, ZCIEA has shaped a notion of citizenship based on 'collectivity'. ZCIEA members appreciated and used the skills they obtained through training or opportunities provided by ZCIEA, but even mere belonging to the ZCIEA 'family' was valuable to them as it gave a sense of protection and representation (Ibid.; Interview with William, 22 August 2016; with Holly, 22 August 2016; with Moreblessing, 1 May 2018).

As we have seen, NAVUZ was the most active ISO in combating the marginalisation of the informal sector. Kudakwashe, a vendor in Harare CBD, recalled: 'we have met someone clever, like Sten Zvorwadza.... He told us that for us to win this war [for a right to vend] we should have an organisation to represent us all, then, we will have an office and seek help' (Interview with Kudakwashe, 1 September 2016). John, a NAVUZ member, explained that NAVUZ empowered members to stop harassment and marginalisation: 'NAVUZ started mobilising and educating us so that the police stop harassing us and taking our things' (Interview with John, 1 September 2016).

This high level of activity can be explained by the fact that NAVUZ worked extensively in the CBD where they faced large-scale marginalisation and harassment. During their protests, NAVUZ members often used slogans, such as *Vendors are not Criminals*, *Legalise Vending* or *Vending is My Life* aimed at combating stigmatisation (NAVUZ, 2016a). NAVUZ's litter-monitoring campaign in the CBD could be interpreted as an attempt to challenge the association of vendors with the disorder, uncleanliness, and the spread of disease and to claim the right to the city. NAVUZ combated the exclusion and marginalisation of the informal sector at the policy level as well. Members attended meetings with top officials. As Kudakwashe described, they attended a meeting with Saviour Kasukuwere, the then Minister of Local Government, when Kasukuwere refused to talk to them: 'he probably did not expect vendors to come' (Interview with Kudakwashe, 1 September 2016). As vendors felt excluded from the policy dialogue, they were excited at the prospect of challenging the authorities. Kudakwashe explained: 'we told that we had nothing to do with politics, but our only fight is to provide food and take kids to school.... We fight for human rights to be respected.... We want our Constitution to work. We are going to dissolve the Parliament. We are going to vend inside the Parliament whether they like it or not!' (Ibid.). John, another NAVUZ member, clarified that they did not get involved in partisan politics: 'we are not politicians, but we fight for human rights to be respected' (Interview with John, 1 September 2016).

NAVUZ has emphasised a classic rights-based notion of citizenship in continuation with earlier NGOs as explored in Chapter 5 with elements of insurgent citizenship expressed by their broad organisation of and participation in protests. Many interviewees appealed to the constitutional rights they had as Zimbabwean citizens, which was not seen in other ISOs (Interview with Maria, 1 September 2016; with John, 1 September 2016; with George, 1 September 2016). NAVUZ member Maria, argued passionately: 'it is our constitutional right to vend! The Constitution allows us to vend!' (Interview with Maria, 1 September 2016). Another NAVUZ member, George, described his and other members' experience with using

legal instruments to explain their position: ‘we asked the Council to give us by-laws that they are using because what the Council is doing – arresting and confiscating our wares – is against the Constitution. What is written in the Constitution is actually different from what they do’ (Interview with George, 1 September 2016).

ZISO had a different approach. Although they recognised the marginalisation of the informal sector (Interview with Promise Mkwanzani, 30 July 2016), they did not address it at the political level: members did not attend policy meetings, participate in protests or write petitions. ZISO focused on the development of an entrepreneurial spirit and the skills of its members. It aimed to change its members’ thinking about their work and shift their self-perception from ‘vendors’ and ‘petty producers’ to ‘businessmen/women’ and ‘entrepreneurs’ – respectable notions associated with the formal economy and the notions of modernity (see Chapters 2 and 3). ZISO members challenged marginalisation by producing an alternative discourse of the informal sector as a viable economic sector possessing extensive resources, entrepreneurship, space for growth, and enormous potential (Interview with Glenda, 16 August 2016; with Wellington, 16 August 2016), and modifying their visions of the informal sector and daily practices by using business skills: ‘there are a lot of informal sector [businesses] that are amazing.... We are used to thinking that we want jobs. But working for yourself is a job. We are used to saying that a job is when you work for someone else, but I can also create employment for someone else’ (Interview with Glenda, 16 August 2016). Molly, who proudly called herself a businesswoman, had high aspirations that were encouraged by ZISO: ‘I do cross-border [trade] for many years. I want to grow my business and set up my own import and export company here in Zimbabwe’ (Interview with Molly, 16 August 2016). Wellington, a ZISO member who appreciated the skills he learned at ZISO, explained what steps he could take to grow his business: ‘[ZISO] helps us develop business. We were taught about value exchange. For example, a guy who does graphic design, I can give him [my product], and he designs [a logo or a poster] for me. That is what we learned from ZISO’ (Interview with

Wellington, ZISO member, 16 August 2016). Citizenship of ZISO members was based on the notion of ‘respectability’ which was associated with the formal sector and which they tried to extend to the informal sector.

Overall, ISOs helped their members rise as self-reliant citizens who did not expect assistance or protection from the government or local authorities and addressed the challenges that they faced by themselves or through non-governmental organisations. At the same time, ISOs had different levels of political impact with NAVUZ having shown the greater capacity for combining survival and rights-based governmental politics involving their members at all stages, thus being able to engage with the authorities in more profound ways and achieve more tangible results than other ISOs. Although all three ISOs stimulated their members to become self-reliant citizens, each organisation emphasised different notions of citizenship based on the organisation’s orientation, political activity, history, and experiences of members. ZCIEA shaped a collectivity-based notion of citizenship in a trade union manner, NAVUZ emphasised civic rights of their members, while ZISO appealed to the notion of respectability which was usually denied to informal sector actors.

§5. CONCLUSION

By 2016, ISOs had become visible and powerful actors in Zimbabwean urban politics. With the massive scope of the informal sector and intense (and often violent) partisan divisions in society, ISOs provided space for non-partisan organisation and associational life for informal sector people. They had other important functions, such as education and training on a variety of issues people in the informal sector had to deal with, such as business management, accounting, socio-economic and constitutional rights, and a networking platform through which members could unite to solve their problems.

In the process of engaging in power relations and self-formation, the ISOs encouraged their members to become and see themselves as independent and self-reliant citizens who could solve their problems on their own, but who were also equipped with the knowledge and skills to approach the authorities. The ideas about citizenship among ISO members were grounded in the collective identities of these organisations. The sources and the notions of citizenship each organisation employed varied. As we have seen, ZCIEA shaped the collectivity-based notion of citizenship among its members who, more than anything, valued the belonging to an organisation associated with trade unions and saw it as a ‘family’. NAVUZ cultivated a rights-based notion of citizenship through training on constitutional and socio-economic rights, and NAVUZ members found it particularly useful and important in the context of the CBD. ZISO shaped a notion of the informal sector based on ‘respectability’ – the organisation and its members argued that the informal sector was as creative, entrepreneurial, and significant as the formal economy.

NAVUZ has risen as the only ISO which has achieved ‘tangible’ results through protests, and this fact empowered NAVUZ members and allowed them to challenge their marginalisation. Members of ZISO and ZCIEA were not interested in acting like NAVUZ members and preferred to adapt to the hostile economic and political environment rather than engage in confrontation with the local authorities. I argue that NAVUZ had greater political agency owing to the hostility of the CBD environment, frequent harassment of vendors, and strong linkages between NAVUZ leaders and members. Despite their and other organisations’ activism, many informal sector problems persisted as their solution required the large-scale cooperation of different institutions. Persistent problems included stigmatisation and marginalisation, corruption, police harassment, lack of access to finance, limited water and sanitation facilities at marketplaces, and lack of designated sites to name a few. However, ISOs may impact politics not only through the collective political action of their members but also through producing specific ideas about citizenship which affect people’s lived citizenship

practices in everyday life and activity in the informal sector. These practices transform the informal sector from the inside. All three organisations empowered their members in their relations with the authorities and improved their vision of themselves and the informal sector. Reinforcing distinctive ideas about citizenship through a variety of mechanisms in all three organisations also had a strong political impact as it shaped and strengthened ISO members position within political power structures and demonstrated their ability to participate and influence political processes and politics towards and within the informal sector.

Despite their significant impact and emerging power, ISOs were prone to internal conflicts and affected by broader development in the country which may be justified because of the politicisation of the informal sector in general and the fact that ISOs are relatively novel actors in the Zimbabwean civic and political arena. Since November 2017, the situation for ISOs had changed significantly. Political developments in Zimbabwe in late 2017–2018, the coup, the resignation of Robert Mugabe, the ‘new dispensation’, and the declared openness of the Zimbabwean economy had a significant impact on the civic and political life in Zimbabwe, including on ISOs many of which had to rethink their agendas, practices, and alliances and adapt to the changed circumstances. ZISO temporarily stopped working, but during my 2018 field research and conversations with Promise Mkwanzani, I acquired an impression that ZISO was rethinking itself in line with the *Zimbabwe Is Open for Business* mantra (Interview with Promise Mkwanzani, 28 January 2018). ZCIEA had distanced itself from the ZCTU by 2018 (Interview with Elijah Mutemeri, 5 March 2018). NAVUZ’s activity slowed down significantly, and in 2018 a narrative circulated that NAVUZ and its leader, Sten Zvorwadza, had sided with President Emmerson Mnangagwa (Chinowaita, 2018; Murwira, 2018b; *ZimEye*, 2018b). Despite all these developments, the impact that ISOs have had on the ideas and practices of citizenship in the informal sector cannot be overestimated. They were the first organisations that directly represented the interests and addressed the needs of people with informal sector

livelihoods, attempted to politically empower them, helped sustain a livelihood, and shaped their ideas and practices of citizenship.

CHAPTER 7.

THE CHANGING UNDERSTANDING OF CITIZENSHIP: ESCAPING THE MODERNITY TRAP

§1. INTRODUCTION

As we have seen in the previous Chapter, there are multiple ways in which citizenship of individuals in informal sector organisations (ISOs) might be shaped, experienced, and practised on the basis of collective identities of ISOs and specific notions of citizenship, such as respectability, collectivity and rights. As a lived practice, citizenship is not a static phenomenon that can be assigned to a particular person. It is dynamic and is negotiated, debated, and challenged by individuals both within ISOs and in the informal sector generally. Key aspects of citizenship which are debated by individuals in the informal sector in Harare are firmly tied to modernist notions about citizenship and include formal employment, taxation, productivity and residence. As explored in Chapter 3, economic informalisation led to the divide between the modernist mindset and survivalist reality. The modernist mindset underpinned political approaches to the informal city and the urban space as well as actions of many political and civic actors (see Chapters 4 and 5). On this basis, informal sector actors challenge these modernist notions of citizenship and reimagine these ideas and practices of lived citizenship in the context of vast economic informalisation.

As was argued earlier in the thesis, economic informalisation and its challenges have slowly affected individuals' 'modernisation mindset' over the 2000s. These modernist ideas have been at the foundation of colonial and post-colonial notions of citizenship enforced by the colonial administration and then by the Zimbabwe African National Union–Patriotic Front (ZANU–PF) government. After the end of the Government of National Unity (GNU) period in 2013, when the economic situation started worsening again, the contours of citizenship changed as individuals in the informal sector debated long-standing state-defined ideas about citizenship and developed alternative ideas and practices of lived citizenship. Citizenship in Zimbabwe has acquired characteristics specific to the country's economic context. It has departed from the

previous understanding of citizenship influenced by the modernisation paradigm when a 'proper' and 'respectable' urban citizen was understood as formally employed, productive, and contributing to the economy, as explored in Chapter 2. The categories of taxation, productivity, and residence have been debated and re-negotiated by informal sector actors. As a result, the modernist assumptions of the 1980s–1990s, that one is more respectable, better placed in the community and more socio-economic and political rights if s/he has a formal job or that a good education guarantees employment, have been challenged. To understand citizenship in Zimbabwe post-2013 in the context of another wave of the economic decline after the end of the GNU, one should think about several criteria and factors that characterise an individual as a member of the political community of Zimbabwe as well as analyse some of the outdated modernist expectations which affect individuals' attitudes to this political community. These criteria and elements include productivity, taxation, in/formal work, and in/formal residence. The Chapter argues that all these notions have parted with the modernist ideas held and enforced by the government and local authorities and supported by parts of society, and that individuals in the informal sector have re-imagined them to fit the economic reality and changed their imagination of themselves as citizens.

The Chapter is based on interviews with politicians, civic activists, and informal sector actors. Interviews allow me to explore how people interpret different notions of citizenship that have been imposed by the government and long endorsed by society in the changing economic situation. The narratives of individuals in the informal sector demonstrate their attitudes to these ideas and transformations that have happened in their interpretation of citizenship. The interviews with politicians and civic activists allow me to clarify the ideas that are seen as foundations of citizenship and how they interpret these ideas.

§2. DEBATING PRODUCTIVITY: THE ‘MISSING VALUE’ IN ZIMBABWE’S INFORMAL SECTOR

Productivity is one of the core obligations that authorities impose on citizens in many political communities. Not only is productivity often a prerequisite for full citizenship, but it is also a part of the concept of ‘productive citizenship’, i.e. a citizen contributing to the economy. As discussed in Chapters 2 and 3, the idea of a citizen as a productive human being has a long history in Zimbabwe as individuals have been expected to contribute to society and sustain themselves. Usually, a formal paid job was considered a prerequisite for productive urban citizenship. Productivity as grounds for citizenship may have different elements and meanings depending on whether a society is rural or urban, agricultural or industrial, socialist or neoliberal, but the core message is intact – a ‘good’ citizen is a productive one. Economic informalisation in Zimbabwe has led to a challenging situation regarding productivity as a basis for citizenship as the vast majority of the urban population may be viewed as unproductive by the government, local authorities, politicians, and even other informal sector actors since they mainly engage in vending and cross-border trade as a source of livelihood, as opposed to manufacturing, formal employment in industries, or farming. This results in informal sector actors questioning their supposed lack of contribution to the economy, which has shifted the contours of citizenship.

As was discussed in Chapter 2, in urban areas, the colonial administration viewed productivity in the context of labour denying urban citizenship to anyone who was not deemed to be engaged in productive and formal economic activities (see, for instance, Barnes, 1992, 1999; Alexander, 2012). The trend of punishing ‘unproductive’ individuals and denying them urban citizenship continued in the post-colonial era and peaked during the 2005 Operation *Murambatsvina*. As Sara Rich Dorman explains, ‘the state’s concern with productivity profoundly shapes emergent conceptions of citizenship and nationhood. Inclusion in ‘productive’ realms of

the state determines inclusion in the political project as full citizens' (Dorman, 2015, p. 86). I suggest that people in the informal sector have come to challenge such beliefs, and informal producers and manufacturers challenge the very notion of productivity as a foundation of 'good' urban citizenship.

In the urban informal sector, productivity became a controversial issue. It was estimated that Zimbabwe in 2018 had the world's second-largest informal sector (both agricultural and non-agricultural) that constituted 60.6% of the gross domestic product (Medina and Schneider, 2018, p. 23). The non-agricultural informal sector in 2011 was a source of livelihood for 62% of the population (ILO, 2019).³³ However, its contribution to the economy is never considered sufficient by the authorities. As was suggested in Chapter 4, for the government, it is only the registered, productive economic activities that deserve assistance and attention (Interview with Tanaka, 10 May 2018). Chapters 3 and 4 have argued that because of this approach as well as broader modernist convictions, the Zimbabwean economy has acquired such metaphors as a 'supermarket economy', 'a nation of vendors', or 'a nation of traders' (Interview with Tapiwa Mashakada, 14 March 2018; Biti, 2014; McIlhone, 2013) which have negative connotations and expose a group of people with precarious and fragile livelihoods – street vendors, informal traders, hawkers, and cross-border traders – to stigma. Even though it is clear that it is the governmental policies and neoliberal reforms of the Economic Structural Adjustment Programme (ESAP) that led to the current economic situation (Mlambo, 2017), the message of these epithets is that it is vendors and cross-border traders who buy and sell, turn the entire country into a supermarket, do not engage in productive activities, and damage the national economy. This makes them an easy target to blame for the government and local authorities who are unable to re-industrialise the national economy or adapt to economic informalisation.

³³ Less up-to-date data suggest that even in 2004, 52% of the total population worked in the informal non-agricultural sector (Ulandssekretariatet LO/FTF Council, 2014, p. 14).

Among individuals in the informal sector, there are differing opinions about productivity as an element of citizenship and grounds for respectability and contribution to the national economy. Informal manufacturers and producers debate the very notion of productivity as a foundation of citizenship in Zimbabwe. Munya's (Interview, 27 March 2018) experience and attitude are interesting: in 2016–2017, he set up an informal meat processing business. He received business training with the Zimbabwe Informal Sector Organisation (ZISO) and Boost Fellowship which allowed him to learn how to organise the operation and market his product. He found suppliers and identified production sites in the city centre as he could not afford to purchase the necessary equipment. However, he faced significant challenges when he was forced to pay bribes to the police to be allowed to process meat at his chosen operation site. In late 2017, he decided to shift to retail and open a tuck shop due to these difficulties. He wanted to remain a producer, but that was impossible under the circumstances:

even if I want to be a producer, and I hope to get there eventually... I need to find an alternative so that I can sustain my life. I need to make money so that I could re-invest towards another project to become a producer, but for now, I have to do something to survive. The current set-up in Zimbabwe is buying and selling, so I need to venture along with the slide. But, of course, the country will change in a year, or two, or ten years, and then I want to contribute to the country by producing, but now I have to venture into buying and selling to survive. That's the real answer... Definitely [I felt like more of a citizen when I was a producer]! You feel proud because you are hands-on, you know how to process. A month ago, there was an issue when Zimbabwe banned the importation of meat from South Africa. So, if you were a producer then, you would definitely feel like a citizen because you are the only alternative to buy from.

To Munya, there was an inherent value in being a producer because it gave one a comparative advantage as well as a sense of pride and value due to being productive and supplying goods to the market. In his opinion, being a producer came with a higher social status and respectability (than a street vendor, for example) which enhanced one's position as a citizen and experience of lived citizenship both in one's community and the state in general. However, he did not think that the authorities treated informal producers any differently from vendors, and his experience of police harassment proved that.

Sekayi (Interview, 14 May 2018), a middle-aged man with a long record of employment in the furniture manufacturing industry, who illegally used his backyard to make furniture, had a similar opinion, although his experience in informal manufacturing was very different. He said that he had been more respected in the community while formally employed as his backyard industry was bringing noise, dust, and waste into his community which was of inconvenience to his neighbours. Despite this, he claimed it was advantageous to be a producer:

[Being] a local producer leads to respect... You are contributing to the economy. Suppose, I formalise, I get a factory, I will get people to work in the factory. Now the company pays taxes, workers pay taxes, and I contribute to the economy. Unlike a person who goes to buy products outside and comes to sell them here and take away money again. There's a difference.

- *Do you think you get more respect than a vendor because you are a producer?*

Yeah. Because there are some people, even whites from this area [the Avenues], they can make a phone call: 'I want this'. You send them a picture; they say it's what they want. This is respect.

- *And in your community, are you treated better because you are a producer?*

Yeah. In the current situation, they understand that it's my industry. No one will go to the police to report on me. Which means they come to understand what I am doing which is to earn a living.

He, however, also noted, that the local authorities and government treated him as a producer and vendors and cross-border traders the same. He claimed that in his community, the local authorities and the police harassed neither him nor vendors because they understood that everyone experienced hardships and tried to make a living. For Sekayi, there was no difference in this economic situation between an informal producer and a vendor as citizens. However, in his view, producers had a greater potential to contribute to the economy in the future; therefore, they had the potential to gain higher social status and respectability which would ultimately enhance their lived citizenship experience.

Another opinion shared by people in the informal sector is that it is not productivity in terms of making new goods but productivity as wealth that affects one's lived citizenship in a positive manner since wealth may be closely linked to such experiences of citizenship as economic security, respectability, high social status, regular or legal residence, access to public

services, and even greater rights as it may enhance one's bargaining position. A group of furniture manufacturers in Glenview (Interview with Eric, Takudzwa, and Timothy, 12 April 2018) explained:

now [your respectability and status as a citizen are] up to the amount of money that you have. If you are producing more money which you can channel into the economy, then for the government and for yourself, it is better than us. These chairs [points to the furniture he is selling (see Figure 10 for an example)], we sold one set [a dining table and four chairs] for a hundred bucks only. This is not equal to someone who is channelling thousands into the economy... Those informal traders who are contributing more to the economy or are putting more money into the economy are treated better than us... We want all informal traders to be treated equally, but in this reality, this cannot happen. Those vendors who sell tomatoes in the city centre, and they are harassed, nothing has been done to respect them or help them, but for those Chinese guys who come with their wares and bring money and whatever, whatever, whatever, they can be respected [by the authorities and government], they can be treated better than us.



Figure 10. Chairs and tables, products of backyard industry, for sale in a residential area. Source: Kristina Pikovskaia (2016).

Again, these producers did not think that the fact that they were productive improved their position as citizens. They were frustrated that all Zimbabweans in the informal sector were

mistreated while prosperous foreign businesses were privileged. Will (Interview, 26 March 2018), a vendor, shared a similar opinion: ‘yes, there is a feeling [that producers are empowered more as citizens than vendors in terms of socio-economic rights], but even these guys at Siyaso in Mbare (see Figure 11),³⁴ they are not making money. They are living hand to mouth. What you are making today, you will use tomorrow’. Although he stressed that it should not have been like this because in the Christian tradition everyone should be treated equally, wealthier individuals in the informal sector got better treatment from the authorities, and productivity had nothing to do with one’s experiences of citizenship.



Figure 11. *Manufacturers and the goods they sell at Siyaso/Magaba area in Mbare. Source: Kristina Pikovskaia (2016).*

Finally, people’s narratives have challenged the idea that vendors and cross-border traders are unproductive, do not contribute to the economy, and are lesser citizens than formal

³⁴ Siyaso is an established home industry site and informal market in the oldest township of Harare.

manufacturers. In addition, it is a common argument that vendors who operate in proximity to supermarkets (see Figure 12), not only are unproductive themselves but also draw away revenue from formal businesses and, hence, tax base (Interview with Tapiwa Mashakada, 14 March 2018). Vendors, who operated from a site adjacent to a shopping centre with the permission of the owner, argued in contrast that they contributed to the economy: as many people are poor, they cannot purchase wholesale products from a supermarket, such as a bag of sweets. Vendors may purchase a whole bag and resell sweets one by one to individuals, thus helping the supermarket to make a profit and consumers to get the product they want. This way, they contributed to the economy: although they do not produce new goods, they facilitate the distribution of existing goods and thereby assist the formal economy (Interview with Peter and Mike, 14 April 2018).



Figure 12. *An informal fruit and vegetable market in Mabvuku–Tafara near a supermarket (in the distance). Source: Kristina Pikovskaia (2016).*

Similarly, carpenters in Glenview 8 area also debated the assumption that cross-border traders were unproductive (Interview with Morgan and Michael, 12 April 2018). They suggested that as the Zimbabwean formal economy had collapsed, they could not find the supplies for their manufacturing in the country: ‘everything we use as producers, as carpenters, everything comes from outside – nails, boards, tools – everything comes from outside, so they [cross-border traders] contribute [to the production and the economy]’. They challenged the assumption that lived citizenship of producers’ significantly differed from that of vendors or cross-border traders in terms of respectability, social status and rights because, in this economic situation, they depended on traders for the materials they used in their production processes.

In sum, the meaning of productivity in the informal sector was a hotly debated concept. Although the government has used productivity (in the sense of formal employment, semi-formal businesses, such as a workshop registered with the local authorities, or productive use of land) as one of the foundations for granting or denying citizenship, including urban citizenship in Zimbabwe, its application by the authorities has been arbitrary, and its interpretation by individuals in the informal sector has not been homogenous: not only did people doubt that productivity would make one a ‘good’ urban citizen, they were not even certain that it was more respectable than other informal businesses. They also interpreted productivity differently: as making new goods and as wealth. Informal producers believe that potentially they may contribute to the economy more than vendors and thus enhance their citizenship experiences by gaining greater respectability, higher social status and ultimately improve their bargaining position with the authorities to effectively make a claim to the state provided that the economy kickstarts, but do not see themselves as having a better experience of citizenship because of overwhelming economic informalisation. These tendencies suggest that individuals are not willing to use the idea of productivity to empower a particular group (producers and manufacturers in this case) as citizens since economic informalisation and severe economic

conditions have made producers and vendors dependent upon one another and put everyone in the same conditions with relation to power structures and political institutions.

§3. 'WHERE THERE IS EMPOWERMENT, THERE CAN BE NO TAX': QUESTIONING
TAXATION OF THE INFORMAL SECTOR

A foundation of citizenship in many political societies is a contribution to the national economy through taxation. This section suggests that the existing tax regime for informal sector actors in Zimbabwe is damaging for state–society relations; however, it allows people to debate taxation as grounds for citizenship and articulate their expectations of the state which would encourage them to pay income tax. Individuals in the informal sector aspire to classic citizenship which, however, is strongly affected by economic informalisation and worsening economic conditions and they expect the state to provide them with support in their economic activities, for example through financial services and loans, and to introduce adequate regulations in the informal sector, thus making a case for a quid pro quo arrangement, reciprocal citizenship in which both sides would contribute and have duties and obligations to each other.

Scholars have argued that taxation fortifies a social contract between citizens and the government as the government is more incentivised to provide social services to people to stimulate them to pay taxes, and citizens feel entitled to representation and control over government activities as they fund them through taxes (Isin and Nyers, 2014). In the informal sector, however, taxation as grounds for citizenship is debated as economic informality implies an absence of social protection, work security, and is, in many cases, associated with tax avoidance (ILO, 1993). In the fiscal essentialism approach, lack of taxation is seen as the cornerstone feature of the informal sector (Joshi and Ayee, 2008), and the formalisation of the informal economy is reduced to taxation (Joshi, Prichard and Heady, 2014). It is important to note that informal economic activities are internationally recognised as distinct from clandestine and illegal activities. As the International Labour Organisation (ILO) concludes, informal

economic activities 'are not necessarily performed with the deliberate intention of evading the payment of taxes or social security contributions, or infringing labour or other legislations or administrative provisions' (ILO, 1993, p. 52). In contrast, studies have demonstrated that informal businesses contribute to state revenue through indirect taxes and fees (Meagher, 2013; Pimhidzai and Fox, 2013). Despite that, lack of taxation remains a core characteristic of informal economic activities which has significant implications for citizenship.

The scholarly and policy approaches to taxation in developing countries and its impact on governance, accountability, and citizenship have evolved. From the 1980s to the early 2000s, development economists had a sceptical attitude towards taxation in developing countries. It has been argued that taxation may impede economic growth, jeopardise the formal economic sector, and stimulate economic informality and clandestine economic activities as people would adopt economic behaviours that would help avoid taxes, such as smuggling and trading at black markets (World Bank, 1981; Collier, 1997; Fjeldstad, 2001).

In the 2000s, growing research on informal economies all over the world showed arguments in favour of taxing the informal sector. The interpretation of taxation as a plausible element of informal economies in developing countries came from the 'new fiscal sociology' approach which bridges the gap between instrumental functions of taxation and political and governance issues pertinent to developing countries, such as lack of accountability (Martin, Mehrotra and Prasad, 2009; Keen, 2012). Scholars have argued that taxing the informal sector may have both economic and political benefits. It is said to improve state revenue, stimulate economic growth, and decrease economic informality while also facilitating the accountability of the state to society and improving governance. Taxation may politically empower informal sector actors and enhance their bargaining position with the authorities, which leads to greater accountability of the state and local authorities and improved social service delivery (Titeca, 2002; Perry et al., 2007; Brautigam, Fjeldstad and Moore, 2008; Joshi and Ayee, 2008; Joshi, Prichard and Heady, 2014). There is a direct link to citizenship. As Anuradha Joshi and Joseph

Ayee (2008, p. 187) argue, 'broadening the tax base and developing a 'culture of compliance' can achieve more than simply increasing revenues; it can be a way of re-engaging citizens with the state'. Indeed, in some African countries, taxation is believed to have enhanced the social contract between the state and citizens. Scholars often use the case of Nigeria as a successful example of taxation leading to improved governance and representation (see, for instance, Bodea and LeBas, 2013; de Gramont, 2015). The State of Lagos showed an impressive case of revenue collection through taxation, coupled with improved service delivery and representation. However, introducing taxation to the informal sector proved hard due to people's unwillingness to pay taxes and complications of tax enforcement (de Gramont, 2015). Overall, the costs of the tax administration of informal economic activities exceeded the tax revenue. Kate Meagher (2018) questions the potential benefits of taxation of the informal sector for governance. She suggests that since tax revenue from informal economic activities is low, the informal economy is not homogenous and is not organised, and identity politics is prevalent in the informal economy (see Meagher, 2010), the feasibility of taxation for improved governance and state–society relations is debatable. I argue that the current tax regime does not facilitate the state–society relation in Zimbabwe. However, it allows people to debate their relationship with the state and articulate the conditions under which it would be acceptable for them to pay taxes on their informal sector revenue. This is crucial for their citizenship since effectively they demand a particular kind of citizenship shaped by vast economic informality and harsh economic conditions.

In general, as Sara Rich Dorman (2014, p. 162) suggests, 'African states have rarely been successful in collecting direct forms of taxation, except for import and export duties'. For both colonial and post-colonial states, the state control, especially the control of the capital and major entry and exit points have been essential for generating revenue paving the way to political power and economic gain through patronage networks (Ibid.). Since the informal sector became the dominant economic sector in urban Zimbabwe (in terms of the labour force), the

authorities have taken steps to include it in the tax net to compensate for the loss of revenue due to the formal economy's collapse. In 2005, the government introduced a presumptive tax targeting small-scale businesses, including informal and semi-formal businesses, and in 2011, the scope of businesses falling under the presumptive taxation regime expanded (Ligomeka, 2019). This is a tax scheme that is based on an estimated or predicted income or profit of informal businesses defined by the Zimbabwe Revenue Authority. It raises many questions. Waziona Ligomeka (2019) argues in his paper on flea market traders in Harare that informal traders pay several 'hidden' taxes that are included in their license and registration fees. He argues that they also pay double taxes as traders and cross-border traders since many of them do both, that women's tax burden is heavier than men's as women earn less and are disproportionately taxed, and that the overall tax burden on informal flea market traders is larger than on formal workers for the same reason. However, as Tavonga Njanya (2015) suggests, only 2% of informal businesses registered with the Zimbabwe Revenue Authority to pay the presumptive tax since the hypothetical revenue of different businesses was overestimated as it was calculated based on average income rather than using the businesses' financial records which are mostly non-existent in the informal sector. Godwin Dube and Daniela Casale (2019), in their research on presumptive taxation of the Zimbabwean informal sector, argue that the existing system disregards horizontal and vertical equity (meaning that people at the same economic level bear the same tax burden and people with greater revenue pay more tax respectively), that more visible businesses are more likely to be taxed, and that enforcement is weak, selective, and frequently politically motivated. They suggest that the potential tax revenue from the informal sector is low as it is challenging to organise and administer an effective tax regime in the informal sector, and that formation of informal sector associations may help resolve this problem (Dube and Casale, 2016).

I suggest that in Zimbabwe, conflicting notions about taxation of the informal sector and citizenship among informal sector actors have emerged that affect people's perception of

their citizenship, which becomes contingent on the government's support of the informal sector and accountability. These views are shaped by the economic history of Zimbabwe with its previously flourishing formal economy and by economic informalisation which does not fit the notion of a 'modern' economy. Reinforcing points made in Chapter 4 with regards to the modernist mindset of political parties, these notions can be summed up as 'economy first' and 'citizens first'. On the one hand, there are politicians (both from the ruling party and opposition) who claim that the informal sector is unproductive because it does not contribute to the national treasury and should not exist. They often profess fiscal essentialism and are preoccupied with the idea of formalising the informal sector not so much for the protection of the vulnerable population who engage in informal economic activities to survive in harsh economic and financial conditions, but for taxing these very activities. Dr Tapiwa Mashakada (Interview, 14 March 2018), then Member of Parliament and the Movement for Democratic Change–Tsvangirai (MDC–T) Secretary for Finance and Economic Affairs, pointed out that irregularity and tax avoidance are critical characteristics of informal economic activities. He explained his perspective on taxation:

It is the duty of citizens to pay taxes. It is the law. It is by the operation of the law they must pay taxes. People pay duties and VAT [value-added tax], but [they should also be paying corporate tax as they operate in Zimbabwe], and this is not happening. I hope those people who say that they are paying a lot of taxes show due proof that they do so, otherwise this is just a word of mouth of people who do not pay taxes. But of course, the level of taxes is too high... and it doesn't help promote compliance...

- *Some people say that they do not want to pay taxes because the authorities are not accountable. What do you think about this?*

This is a duty by law. There [are] problems with corruption and transparency, yes. But this is not an excuse for not paying taxes. Taxes are mandatory, they are not optional.

The ZANU–PF government has widely supported the idea of collecting revenue from the informal sector since 2005 (Dube and Casale, 2019). For instance, in 2013, the Deputy Minister of Labour and Social Welfare, Tongai Muzenda announced that the government would take measures to enforce taxation in the informal sector (*Zimbabwean*, 2013). Sithembiso

Nyoni, Small and Medium Enterprise and Co-operative Development Minister, also supported registration and taxation of informal businesses: ‘at least US\$7.4 billion is circulating in this sector. Just imagine if the 2.8 million people were to pay US\$1 per month, what that would contribute to our fiscus... The informal sector comprises unregistered and unregulated people who chose to avoid registration and therefore, taxation’ (quoted in Murwira, 2014).

In these MDC and ZANU–PF views, informal sector actors are essentially criminalised since proponents of this ‘economy first’ approach imply that people in the informal sector deliberately choose to avoid taxation, which is their unconditional duty as citizens of this country. It has a drastic impact on citizenship because taxation, in this case, becomes a single-sided process: citizens are obliged to pay taxes, but there is no guarantee that they will receive anything from the state in return for their compliance.

On the other hand, there are politicians, informal economy advocates, organisations, and people with informal sector livelihoods who disagree with this argument. They have argued that people in the informal sector are disproportionately taxed and do not get sufficient returns from the state on those taxes. In 2014, Tendai Biti, who at the time was MDC–T Secretary-General, called the informal economy ‘the dead economy’ when criticising the government for its inability to re-industrialise the country and recover the tax base: ‘84 per cent of the formal sector has collapsed. Day to day, we are seeing the deindustrialisation of the formal sector. The problem of the informal economy is that it is a dead economy that does not pay taxes and it is a tragedy that this clueless government of the day is celebrating the creation of the informal market’ (Biti, 2014). He, however, did not blame people in the informal sector for not paying taxes. In my interview (11 March 2018) with him in 2018, he clarified his position regarding the informal sector in Zimbabwe and its taxation:

in [the] 2014 budget, Patrick Chinamasa, the Minister of Finance, described the informal economy as the new economy, as the new normal, but economic informalisation cannot be normal, it’s an absurdity because the informal economy is dead, it’s dead capital. That’s why I underscored that the informal economy is the product of the failure of the predatory toxic ZANU–PF regime... Of course

[people in the informal sector do not want to pay taxes], why would they pay tax if they don't have amenities?.. Look, if you had this interview in Nigeria, they would have another view because for them it's normal because they've never seen a normal economy, a 'white' economy, for lack of a better word [modern formal economy]. But here in Zimbabwe, we've gone through a functional state... The whole basis of the struggle for democratisation was no taxation without representation... So, it's difficult to justify tax when the state does not provide the necessary amenities.

Tendai Biti has continued to condemn the government's approach to taxing the informal sector. While holding onto a highly modernist view on the economy, he assigned the blame not to the informal sector but to ZANU–PF. In 2017, when the government introduced new taxing regulations for cross-border traders and some other informal businesses, he argued that the government's actions were 'both callous cruel and totally against economic logic. Zim is in a recession for Christ's sake... Desperate Chinamasa should attend to real reforms and not tax an overburdened poor populace without substantive jobs... Presumptive taxes on the informal sector are retrogressive and will further whittle non-existent aggregate demand leading Zim into a depression' (quoted in Mumera, 2017).

Tendai Chirau (Interview, 30 April 2018) of the ZANU–PF Youth League suggested that the informal sector contributed to the overall national economy, albeit not through taxation occupying a position somewhere between the 'citizens first' and 'economy first' approaches: 'the informal economy is the economy of its own because having a huge chunk of the population work for themselves, but of course, a big issue is that the money that they are getting is not going directly into the fiscus, but it allows people to feed themselves... [People in the informal economy] can feed themselves, clothe themselves, even send their children to school, so in the broader sense it contributes to the economy'. This rhetoric is similar to the approach of the Ministry of Small and Medium Enterprises explored in Chapter 4.

Godfrey Kanyenze (Interview, 18 January 2018), economist and director of the Labour and Economic Development Research Unit Zimbabwe (LEDRIZ), argued that the tax burden in Zimbabwe was cumbersome and the system of presumptive taxation was not sustainable as they are difficult to collect. The best way would be to gradually formalise the informal sector,

thus broadening the taxation base. Representatives of ISOs have supported the idea of taxation in the informal sector but only under certain conditions, reflecting their experience of working in this sector. Wisborn Malaya (Interview, 17 January 2018), the Zimbabwe Chamber of Informal Economy Associations (ZCIEA) Secretary-General, said that taxation is a crucial issue as it helps the country move forward. However, he notes that accountability and citizen recognition by authorities must precede any taxation. He also insists that the tax regime in the informal sector should be more favourable as ‘presumptive tax oppresses informal workers’. Sten Zvorwadza (Interview, 8 January 2018), the Chairperson of the National Vendors Union of Zimbabwe (NAVUZ), also claimed that vendors were ready to pay taxes provided the authorities were accountable and supported the informal sector as informal sector actors had become the drivers of the economy. They emphasised both the need for informal sector actors to contribute to the fiscus and drive the national economy forwards and their right to have a non-oppressive tax regime and accountable authorities who would care about the needs of informal sector actors. While the notions of citizenship employed in ISOs varied as explored in Chapter 6, they still have elements of a classic reciprocal understanding of citizenship where both the state and citizens have rights and obligations.

In all these views, taxation is closely linked to citizenship, and their proponents argue that people in the informal sector already contribute to the economy and can contribute more provided the interests of citizens are a priority and accountability of the state and representation of the interests of citizens are a pre-requisite for taxation. This is fundamentally different from the ‘economy first’ approach which imposes obligations but not rights on informal sector actors as citizens and has the potential to transform state-society relations and empower informal sector actors as citizens who could demand transparency and accountability from the state.

Individuals who work informally also have different attitudes toward taxation and citizenship engaging in the ‘economy first’–‘citizens first’ debate. Some people who work or used to work informally think that the government and local authorities should intervene to

regularise and tax informal economic activities. Tonderai (Interview, 21 December 2017) used to be a flea market trader in Mbare but currently works as a civil servant. He viewed taxation as a broader regulation issue in the informal sector and complained about the general lack of formal regulation and personal discipline of informal sector actors which are central to a 'modern' formal economy:

sometimes we say that at the present moment in Zimbabwe, the economy is being run by informal sectors because there is no industry at the present moment... The government relies on tax, and there is no tax... The informal economy is too harsh for the government because everyone is selling things for his own pocket, nothing for the government...

In Tonderai's view, people in the informal sector are not interested in paying taxes, but he sees it as a problem of the state and local authorities whose job it is to regularise informal economic activities. He puts the interest of the government and national economy first and does not think that any conditions are necessary for people to pay taxes.

In contrast, Innocent (Interview with Innocent and Elvin, 10 April 2018), an informal service provider, who operated in the teaching sector explained that economic and political improvements should come from the government before the authorities request that people in the informal sector pay taxes:

as long as the economy is not on the right track, we cannot really talk about taxation because most of these informal players are not doing it because they want to do anything to the government [i.e. punish the government for not providing jobs by not paying taxes], they are not trying to retaliate for what the government has brought upon them, and the government among other [actors] should create employment [first].

Emma (Interview, 1 May 2018), a female cross-border trader, argued that considering the harsh economic conditions, it is people in the informal sector, especially cross-border traders who bear the heaviest tax burden:

I think we are the very people who pay the taxes every day because we do cross the borders every day, and there we release a lot of money, and that is how I think we are paying our taxes because we are the most dominant working group in Zimbabwe. Those who are formalised they are not paying taxes because they don't have the money – no salaries, so how can they pay taxes? The informal is the branch that is surviving and existing, so it is us who are paying.

In her view, as a citizen, she was doing more for the state and national economy than formally employed people. She suggested, however, that she was not treated as a citizen, despite her contribution to the economy, by the state and local authorities.

Other individuals with informal sector livelihoods suggested that taxation was an assertion of citizenship in the sense that it should be seen as a two-sided process: the state should provide services and support informal sector actors, and they in return may pay tax. Peter and Mike (Interview, 14 April 2018), both vendors, say that they are ready to pay taxes from their vending revenue, but only if the authorities come forward to help them organise and register to pay taxes. For them, taxation was conditional upon cooperation from the local authorities and the state in whose interest it should be to assist informal sector actors.

Eric, Takudzwa, and Timothy (Interview, 12 April 2018), furniture manufacturers in Glenview, also noted that there is no proper channel for them to pay taxes. Then, they mentioned that they already pay indirect taxes, such as value-added tax, whenever they shop in formal stores and supermarkets. Overall, they concluded that the state had not done anything for them despite the promises of the ZANU–PF government. Takudzwa said:

where there is empowerment, there is no tax. And they [ZANU-PF] say it's 100% empowerment.³⁵ Tax for what? How can you empower someone if you don't give them anything? If you go to the bank and say that you want to start a business and need a loan, they will ask what you have, if you can mortgage a house or something. What does someone just like me have? Trousers and a jacket! They won't give you money.

Similarly to Peter and Mike, Eric, Takudzwa, and Timothy demand certain conditions from the state, such as access to loans, financial support of the informal sector, and an adequate taxation scheme. Economic informalisation and severe economic conditions dictated these conditions. Therefore, informal sector actors made a claim for a specific kind of reciprocal

³⁵ '100% empowerment' was one of ZANU-PF slogans during the 2008 electoral campaigns when they emphasised their indigenisation programme.

citizenship which was shaped by the informal sector they have to rely on to make a living and want a quid pro quo relationship with the state.

Taxation of the informal sector has become a contested topic in Zimbabwe. The government's efforts to introduce and enforce taxation, particularly from 2011 when the scope of businesses eligible for presumptive tax broadened, have not been sustainable. With the ineffective and oppressive presumptive tax system, which prevails in the informal sector in Zimbabwe, or completely absent tax regime for a large number of informal sector actors (except the VAT and import duties), the taxation of the informal sector does not improve state–society relations and governance.

People in the informal sector do not object to paying taxes from the revenue they generate in the informal sector in theory; however, they want the local authorities and the state to reciprocate, support the informal sector, provide services, be accountable, introduce viable regulations, and organise tax collection. They demand to be recognised as citizens with rights by a state with obligations to them, particularly under these harsh economic conditions where people needed institutional and financial support in the form of loans to develop their businesses before they paid tax on their informal economic activities. Individuals in the informal sector do not deliberately avoid taxation, but they also do not see any incentive to comply with an oppressive tax regime as there are no returns from the authorities. Through their narratives and political actions, people demand accountability from the local authorities and the government, and this goes beyond the agenda of the informal sector. People's awareness of the hidden and indirect taxes that they pay to the state and local authorities was an essential factor in their position as citizens as they realised that their compliance with the tax regime should depend on the authorities' accountability. People with informal sector livelihoods also entered the debate about their contribution as citizens to the national economy through taxes as compared to that of the formal economy. They challenged the assumption that the informal sector did not contribute to the national economy and argued that they were the ones who 'keep this economy

running'. All these developments regarding taxation of the informal sector and its perception by informal sector actors show that ineffective and largely absent direct forms of taxation contingent on recognition of people as citizens and accountability significantly affect people's perception of their citizenship. In the context of vast economic informalisation and the divide between the modernist mindset and survivalist reality, individuals in the informal sector debate taxation and articulate the conditions under which they would consider it appropriate for the government to demand taxes from informal sector actors.

§4. RETHINKING THE BENEFITS OF FORMAL AND INFORMAL SECTORS

As was argued in Chapters 2 and 3, due to the history of urban planning, control over the workforce and construction of the notions of respectability tied to labour, the notions of formal and informal work are essential for the understanding of citizenship: historically formally employed people enjoyed respect in their communities, were seen as 'good' citizens and had a right to the city more than those in the informal sector. I argue that the notion of formal employment with its respectability and higher social status and an enhanced experience of citizenship (more rights, a more advantageous position in the political hierarchy of the city and state and a better bargaining position, more respect in society, better treatment from the local authorities and the government, and better self-perception in society) has changed after 2013 under the impact of worsening economic and financial conditions, with some individuals in the informal sector arguing that formal employment after 2013 had more disadvantages than the informal sector and did not entail a better position for individuals as citizens.

As we saw in Chapter 1, there are conflicting notions about the importance of informality to the definition of economies in Africa. I have suggested that in Zimbabwe, the formal/informal economy divide is important because it is linked to the definition of 'modern' which shapes politics at the national and local levels and perceptions of individuals towards the informal sector, and its role in contemporary urban citizenship. As was demonstrated in

Chapter 2, in the colonial era, it was only formal employment that was considered modern and respectable; it was the basis on which urban citizenship was extended to individuals, and which gave a right to be in the city. In an attempt to control the labour force and limit rural to urban migration, colonial administrators introduced legal and other measures to discipline and punish all those whom they deemed undesirable, including informal sector actors, such as vendors and hawkers as they were not formally employed (White, 1987; Elbourne, 1994; Martens, 2003; Alexander, 2012). It is crucial to understand whether formal employment has preserved its respectability and status post-2013 and is still viewed as more prestigious and dignified than informal economic activities and whether individuals believe that formal employment enhances one's experience of citizenship by improving her/his position in the community, city, and state through respectability, higher social status, claims to services and socio-economic and political rights.

There are varying attitudes to formal employment and work in the informal sector which link together welfare issues, the notions of respectability and modernity, and urban citizenship which have been touched upon in Chapter 3. Some people have maintained modernist convictions that a formal job is respectable, unlike informal work. Tinashe (Interview, 5 January 2018), a young male clothes vendor with a formal employment record, preferred formal employment because, as he put it, many benefits could potentially come with it, such as better accommodation, transport, medical aid, and food quality. In his opinion, when one had a formal job, he could budget and plan. Tinashe said that working formally was 'working at a different level', and that a formally employed person was respected in the community and by the authorities. 'when you are informal, you are always treated like a suspect', he explained. Tinashe argued that the police and local authorities constantly harassed informal sector actors and 'no one care[d] for them'. He insisted that informal work was viewed as deviance and meant that one was a failure because he did not have a formal job. In his narrative, the informal sector

is presented as criminalised by the police and authorities and informal sector actors are portrayed as deprived of rights that formally employed people enjoy.

Tonderai (Interview, 21 December 2017), a middle-aged man, was an employee until 2004, but as the economy was going downhill, he turned to informal economic activities. At first, he bought, mended, and sold bicycles in his neighbourhood in Mbare. Later, in 2008, he obtained a market stall at Mbare flea market. However, ZANU–PF coercive patronage networks were robust at the time. ZANU–PF members seized his stall, and he could not get it back. A few years later he managed to get a formal job at a Ministry. His insights are particularly interesting as he has had extensive work experience in both formal and informal settings. Tonderai explained the differences between the two:

I think there is a lot of difference on both sides. Where I'm working now – it's a stable job. I'll have a pension, medical aid, funeral policies, whatever, and it is guaranteed that the wages, the salaries are coming. Since I'm in the government, job security is there. These informal traders, yes, if you have a good market, if you are focused, and you aren't disturbed – it is okay because you are doing your own thing and you can rise and open more stalls, whatever, and money, since there is a problem of cash right now, it will come through your hands every day unlike when you are working, you can't even see cash because we use EcoCash,³⁶ electronic transfers and bank transfers and whatever. The only problem is the police, and the government now says that people should move away from town going back to market stalls they built. Some go back to Mbare and whatever which is far from people now. The thing is, the place should be where everyone can easily come... I used to enjoy it [working informally], and until now I missed it because interacting with people, all types of people, and teaching new tricks, like where the economy is going, what can we do, are we penetrating foreign borders, like South Africa to get things – it brings new ideas. You started by selling clothes, and you end up farming because someone says, 'If you grow maize this time, by that time it will repay you'. I think you get a lot of things and you don't rely on one project.

He concluded his discussion of advantages and disadvantages of formal and informal work by giving an example of his friend who had started a small informal cross-border trade business, but in less than ten years managed to formalise it and opened a retail store in the city centre. When asked why he had decided to look for a formal job, Tonderai explained: 'during the times of Unity Government [2009–2013] things were working... People started to enjoy life. That's

³⁶ EcoCash is an electronic money transfer system.

when I started thinking that I should get formal employment since I was not getting younger. When I die, I need a sort of pension for my kids or something when I grow old. So, I took that advantage when people were newly appointed because most people left their jobs to go to foreign lands to look for jobs. That's when I found myself joining the Ministry'. Tonderai did not think that the informal sector was less respectable or was marginal compared to the formal sector. However, his experience in the informal sector and his perception of the challenges informal sector actors have faced, such as police harassment and coercive political patronage, as well as policies and measures of the government and local authorities to control informal economic activities in Harare city centre demonstrate that the government and local authorities see people in the informal sector as lesser citizens than formally employed people. His main argument for his choosing the civil service over informal economic activity was essentially social and economic rights, such as job security and social security, including healthcare, pension, and funeral policy, which the informal sector cannot guarantee by definition. By shifting to the formal sector, he has improved his citizenship experience by acquiring these rights, though they remain precarious in challenging economic conditions.

In my interview with Holly (5 January 2018), a young female vendor and cross-border trader, she doubted that a formal job could bring any stability and enhance one's citizenship. She said that due to the difficult economic situation, it was actually better to be in the informal sector. Formally employed people, she claimed, although theoretically, they had regular earnings, were not paid on time, and when they were, they could not access the money – they had to spend long hours queueing in banks to withdraw some cash due to cash shortages.³⁷ EcoCash was not a viable option because some transfers could take up to 20% in commission, and one could lose much money this way. Holly did not deny that informal work was hard

³⁷ This refers to the post-2016 period. In 2016, bond notes were added to the multi-currency regime to compensate for the fall in the circulation of the US dollar and South African rand, and due to the illegal currency exchange market, the official 1:1 ratio of bond notes to US dollar collapsed and resulted in a significant decrease in the value of bond notes. A decreasing supply of bond notes led to Zimbabwean banks putting a \$30 in bond notes limit on cash withdrawals (Quist-Arcton, 2016b; Harding, 2018; AfricaNews, 2019; Muronzi, 2019).

because it was not regularised and people who owed her money for bringing goods from across the border, for instance, did not always pay her back. She had to hustle a lot, walk in the streets, talk to people. The main advantage, Holly said, was that in the informal sector she could budget for herself and had access to cash. She did not think that a formal job was more respectable than informal work and did not think that formally employed people were treated better in their communities and by the government and local authorities. Contrary to Tonderai's view, Holly did not think that in the post-2013 economic and financial situation formal employment entailed more socio-economic rights or better social status. For her, economic informality meant independence and control over her funds which she would not have in a formal job. In her view, the informal sector was as respectable as the formal but was more financially advantageous than the formal. Her position shows the transformations in the notion of citizenship based on respectability grounded in formal employment as well as the idea that formal employment, by definition, guarantees greater socio-economic rights and citizenship than informal work.

Similarly, Itai (Interview, 14 May 2018) who used to be formally employed at a petrol station but resigned due to harsh working conditions and started an informal business as a wedding choreographer certainly preferred the informal sector because of the flexibility it gave and the fact that he could set working conditions for himself:

I am working with my own condition which I sit for people... It is different with formal work, even if you are sick, you have to go there first in person and say that I'm sick... and it is hard for people to even have their complaints attended because they may say, there are many people looking for employment, and we can just sack you anytime... They don't even care about you as a person.

Emma (Interview, 1 May 2018), a female cross-border trader, questioned if there was any difference between formal and informal jobs:

at present, I think people are not noticing the difference [between formal employment and informal work]. They just take informal as something of a very low grade, but they are in those formal jobs where they are getting nothing. The informal is the backbone of the country... Yes, I think they [the government and local authorities] do that [treat people who are formally employed better as citizens]. Because if you look back, being formally employed was very decent in our country. Those who did informal [work] those days, it was just not considered

a job. They would just consider it as something that has nothing to do with the country. But as time goes on, everyone in this country is informal. Everyone, even those who think they are going to a formal work – they just tuck their cooler boxes with ‘Freeze-Its’³⁸ and sell it at work... [When I started to do cross-border trade], I thought it was not a proper job for me because I thought that one day, I would have a formal job. As time goes on, I just noticed that the country deteriorated time and again, so I have no hope that I will have a chance to secure a [formal] job because at that time you had to know someone who could secure a job for you, and the payments were very-very high.

In Emma’s view, citizenship of informal sector actors was expressed in social status and perception of the informal sector in society. She felt that the government and local authorities treated people with informal sector livelihoods as lesser citizens, but she could not explain how exactly. For her, it was intuitive and closely tied to the societal perception of economic informality. In her narrative, she challenged the assumption of the informal sector as marginal and less dignified than the formal sector. She argued that having a formal job in 2018 was no longer as respectable as it used to be and did not improve formally employed people’s experience of citizenship in terms of socio-economic or political rights and social status. She explained it by the profound economic crisis which forced even formally employed people to engage in informal economic activities to supplement their income and cash supply and suggested the ‘formal’ as a category that used to grant a higher social status and greater socio-economic and political rights and hence improve one’s lived citizenship experience had been disappearing.

Although the formal economy had many advantages over the informal in the past, in post-2013 Zimbabwe with its complicated financial situation and cash shortages, difficulties with accessing one’s wages became one of the major weak points of formal employment. Informants claimed that during the GNU, around 2010–2013, formal employment indeed was their dream because of the stability, regular income, reputation, and dignity that would come with it, but by 2017–2018 they preferred working informally. This is because, although income in the informal sector is usually small, and this occupation is precarious, they always had at least

³⁸ ‘Freeze-It’ is a brand of popsicles.

small amounts of cash in their hands while people in the formal sector had money in their bank accounts but could not withdraw any due to cash shortages. This access to cash could make people in the informal sector better placed in their communities and more economically empowered than people in the formal sector. Due to the financial complications of the Zimbabwean economy and general economic decline, informal sector actors are respected if not more, than as much as a person who is formally employed and are not at a disadvantage as citizens in terms of social status or socio-economic rights. People's understanding of their position in their communities and in the political community of Zimbabwe has been moving from viewing economic informality as the grounds for marginalisation to recognising the advantages of the informal sector in the current financial conditions. Formal employment has started losing its appeal to people because the material advantages of the informal sector (in this case, access to cash) outweigh the 'respectability' factor of a formal job. This process also exemplifies the slow changes in people's utmost belief in modernity in its western colonial sense as the holy grail of development. Although the notion of formal employment as grounds for enhanced experience citizenship in terms of socio-economic rights, political rights and social status is still debated among informal sector actors, since the modernist mindset is still strong and shapes people's views on the socio-economic and political developments in the country (see Chapter 3), the imagination of citizenship has undergone certain changes under the influence of the drastic economic and financial conditions, particularly after 2016, and has moved away from the perception of formal employment as the basic characteristic of a 'good' urban citizen.

§5. THE CITY THAT MAKES PEOPLE SICK: RESIDENCE IN INFORMAL SETTLEMENTS

Residence is one of the basic elements of citizenship. Mahmood Mamdani (1996) has argued that in African countries, residence tied to labour is one of the key foundations of citizenship. The argument was partially challenged by Sara Rich Dorman (2015) who suggests that in Zimbabwe it was long after Independence, in the mid-1990s, that residence became

grounds for citizenship. From the late 1990s, informal settlements rapidly grew around Harare. They are known to be controlled by ZANU–PF (McGregor and Chatiza, 2019). Therefore, a question arises regarding the residence of individuals, who not only work informally but also reside in informal settings, and its implications for citizenship after 2013 when ZANU–PF regained significant control over urban areas. Considering the extent of marginalisation of the informal sector by the authorities and people themselves, one might think that living in an informal settlement would amplify this marginalisation and lead to broader socio-political alienation and exclusion, especially in the vast political patronage networks of informal settlements. However, I suggest that lived citizenship of people who reside in informal settlements has broadened: such settlements have provided them with an opportunity to access cheap housing, use the city space for making a living, and escape the city’s perilous modern features, particularly after 2013, when patronage networks became weaker after the resounding ZANU–PF electoral victory and gradual regularisation of these areas. Regularisation was expected to restore territorial order and state bureaucratic control in informal settlements. However, the process was not smooth and was shaped by both bureaucratic and political (revolutionary nationalist) manifestations and reimagination of clientelist statecraft – the processes shaped not only by the ruling party but also by residents (McGregor and Chatiza, 2019). While conditions in both formal and informal settlements in and around Harare are highly variable, the narratives explored in this section give us a particular perspective on lived citizenship with a reference to informal settlement residence which should be recognised and taken into account when speaking of modernity, urban politics and citizenship.

Informal settlements are often viewed as sites of human rights violations as people there do not have property rights and access to social services and welfare (Davy and Pellissery, 2013, pp. S74–S77) and are therefore deprived of citizenship rights. This idea has, however, been debunked by scholars who have demonstrated that living in an informal settlement does not always infer being a second-rate citizen, but that ‘everyday social contracts of informality’ and

‘insurgent citizenship’ often emerge in such spaces which allow claiming the right to the city. As Benjamin Davy and Sony Pellissery (2013, p. S70) argue, ‘informal settings often entail local versions of the social contract that tie together the residents of an informal settlement or members of an informal economy stronger than formal settings do’. This means that despite the lack or absence of formal regulation and law enforcement, informal settlements have a potential for human rights implementation via informal institutions and linkages, which does not imply that informal settlement residents cannot enjoy full urban citizenship (Davy and Pellissery, 2013). Planning theorists use the term ‘insurgent citizenship’ to discuss unconventional ways of claiming the right to the city (see Chapter 1). Insurgent citizenship entails the defence of existing rights and fight for new rights; it is a way for marginalised groups and individuals to improve their position within power structures of the city and the state by reclaiming contested and insurgent spaces (Friedmann, 2002, pp. 75–78). James Holston (2008, 2009) looks at the case of Brazil’s urban margins and argues that from the 1970s, residents of these urban peripheries have engaged in the construction of a new notion of citizenship contrary to the classical one that is universally inclusive but inegalitarian when it comes to rights. They have used the city margins (illegal residential sites, contested land and illicit housing) to confront the entrenched inequality regime that pushed them to the city margins in the first place. JoAnn McGregor and Kudzai Chatiza (2020), however, use the case of the politics of informal settlements around Harare to warn against the framing of informal settlement politics as ‘insurgent citizenship’. They analyse informal settlements through a ‘partisan citizenship’ prism and argue that partisan affiliation in such spaces has become a basis for differential entitlements and that clientelist relations have become a ‘contextual and contentious domain of ideas and action’ rather than being a purely materialistic relationship in which residents receive housing and security in exchange for partisan loyalty. They suggest that partisan citizenship was employed by ZANU–PF in informal settlements to undermine rights-based understanding of citizenship, and the motivations of residents who consented to it was ‘above all pragmatic, tactical and opportunistic,

motivated by “survival”, and tangential use of structures of power to the end of securing propertied citizenship’ (Ibid., p. 21).

My question is, however, slightly different than these. I ask whether living in an informal settlement adds a greater burden of informality on people who already work informally, how they see themselves in the economic and political structures of the state and the city, and whether they see themselves at a disadvantage as urban citizens in terms of their social status and socio-economic and political rights.

As explored in Chapter 2, informal housing arrangements have a long history in Harare, starting with squatter camps that emerged around the city during the liberation struggle in the 1960s and 1970s. While during the liberation struggle, settlements and refugee camps were tolerated, after Independence, the new government took a U-turn on informal settlements: in the 1980s, many settlements and camps were demolished, and attempts were made to return the displaced people to their rural homes. The new century has witnessed both continuation and disruption in ZANU–PF’s harsh policies towards informal and illegal housing and squatter camps. On the one hand, there has been an apparent continuation with the colonial and post-colonial modernist urban planning tradition which peaked with Operation *Murambatsvina* in 2005. Tsitsi (Interview, 29 December 2017) resided in Kuwadzana, a Harare township. Her house only had one room, and by 2005 she managed to build three more rooms, all of which were demolished during *Murambatsvina* as they were deemed ‘illegal’. This had devastating consequences for Tsitsi – she lost a part of her house in which she had invested money, her possessions, and an additional informal income from renting out some of the rooms. Hundreds of thousands of other people lost their homes and livelihoods entirely as a result of *Murambatsvina* (see, for example, Human Rights Watch, 2005; Potts, 2006). This had tremendous consequences for urban citizenship for the informally housed and employed as many people effectively lost their right to be in the city since every Zimbabwean supposedly had a rural home where they should engage in ‘productive’ economic activities (Dorman, 2014).

On the other hand, the growth and development of informal settlements from 2000 have signified a rupture with the urban planning tradition. From the late 1990s, urban politics has significantly affected informal settlements around Harare. Once the MDC emerged as the main opposition party in 1999, it promptly gained urban voters' support – from 2002 it has won the majority of seats in Harare City Council. ZANU–PF took steps to win back urban voters which included land reform, housing development, cooperative development, and vast patronage networks in all those spheres as well as at informal markets (Kamete, 2007; McGregor, 2013; Muchadenyika, 2015; Muchadenyika and Williams, 2017). JoAnn McGregor and Kudzai Chatiza (2019) suggest that three areas of government policy facilitated the growth of informal settlements around Harare: the land reform, clear-up operations, such as *Murambatsvina*, and housing and cooperative policy. They develop a concept of 'urban frontiers' to discuss the processes of state-making and political contestation that occurred on the city margins. They argue that ZANU–PF created multiple informal settlements through these mechanisms and co-opted them in partisan patronage networks to ensure electoral support. This created an ambiguous status for these settlements: they were not formal and not directly regulated by the city authorities, but they were also not illegal since the state and ruling party ensured their emergence in the first place, and party structures and 'land barons' performed the duties of territorial authorities in such settlements. Once ZANU–PF won the 2013 elections and the opposition weakened, the need for political patronage decreased, and from 2016–2017 such settlements entered the state-driven regularisation route justified by the need for 'sanitation' and 'restoring order'. The regularisation of informal settlements was not as overtly partisan as their establishment and daily life. However, institutions were still designed by the state keeping ZANU–PF interests in mind, and party clients could benefit from the formalisation of plots in informal settlements through corruption and political pressure (McGregor and Chatiza, 2019).

All these urban and peri-urban developments are closely connected to economic informalisation and the broader crisis. They are also vital for our understanding of citizenship

since living in informal settlements adds another layer of informality as residents of such settlements not only work informally but also live in informal settings. The factor of informal settlement residence is also important to consider in the conversation about changing contours of citizenship since, at this scale, it is a recent development that coincided with economic informalisation. One might argue that informal settlement residence negatively affects one's citizenship as people do not have property rights, are disconnected from the city with its social services and authority and are often involved in ZANU–PF's political patronage networks. However, this was not the case for my respondents for whom informal settlement residence was not depicted as a disadvantage in terms of urban citizenship.

Peter (Interview with Peter and Mike, 14 April 2018), a vendor operating from an area adjacent to a supermarket in an affluent suburb of Harare, had resided in an informal settlement in Epworth, 12 kilometres away from Harare city centre, from 1996. When asked about how living in an informal settlement had affected him and why he lived there, he explained that he was satisfied with living in an informal settlement and that he, in fact, preferred to live in an informal settlement considering contemporary trends of urban development in Harare. He explained that he had obtained the stand for a house from a 'land baron', an individual who controlled the area, but at that time, in the mid-1990s, there were no partisan linkages or political patronage. Later, as he explained, politics started encroaching on their life in this area as the ruling party co-opted it. Peter said that everything they did, including voting in elections, had to be aligned with the party's needs or they would be evicted. However, he said that it did not affect him much: 'there are thousands of us. And when there are thousands, you have to join [structures that are organised by the party]'. Peter, however, also saw benefits in living in such a settlement. This settlement would have been demolished as a part of Operation *Murambatsvina* in 2005 if it had not been controlled and protected by ZANU–PF: 'it helped us a lot. They had to stop the evictions because it was the ruling party right in our area that would be affected'. He compared the cost of living in Harare's formal residential areas and informal

settlements, with the latter being more financially appealing. When asked about the costs of a commute from Epworth to Harare, which he had to do nearly every day as he vended in Harare, he claimed that the costs were almost the same whether you came from Epworth or from Harare's townships. One of the most important factors for him was health issues as Harare's townships had been frequently subject to cholera and typhoid outbreaks due to poor water and sanitation system caused by rapid urbanisation and inadequate social service delivery (see Chigudu, 2017, 2019). In this settlement, however, they got water from boreholes and wells which, he insisted, was safer than water in the city of Harare provided by the Council. Peter explained: 'sometimes we get bad adverts that Epworth is a shanty area, that there are outbreaks of typhoid, cholera, but in reality, there have been very few stories like that because there is no sewage running down the road' (see Figure 13 for an example). He argued that it was better to live in informal settlements because they were not connected to Harare's water and sanitation systems, and in their settlement, residents had never had any water-borne diseases.



Figure 13. *Informal economic activities at a doorstep of a supermarket and the sight of collapsed infrastructure and service delivery: poor roads, sewage water, and uncleared rubbish. Source: Kristina Pikovskaia (2016).*

This narrative is compelling in two ways. Firstly, it exhibits the disadvantages of urban modernity in its deeply damaged post-2000 form and an individual's frustration with the modern city and the modern state that in the devastating economic conditions has made people sick and poor. Secondly, it demonstrates that living on the fringes of the city and the state does not necessarily make people disadvantaged as citizens in terms of services – as an urban citizen Peter made a choice in favour of availability of cheap housing and safe water which he could not get in the formal setting of the city of Harare. The dilapidated infrastructure of the city has deprived urban citizens of the right to clean water and sanitation which was supposed to be ensured in a 'modern' city and has become a health hazard that should be avoided. He clearly considered it a substantial advantage that people in Harare townships (that are partially free from patronage networks) did not have. He did not express any frustration or dissatisfaction

with his living arrangements. In contrast, he was content with his housing, and now that it was being formalised, he looked forward to what he called ‘the modern life’ – the notion which can be seen as the restoration of the old post-colonial modernity which was lost due to the economic and political crises. In his case, urban citizenship was re-shaped and broadened: he had exercised his right to the city and used urban space to earn a living, a right to housing (although it had been previously tied to ‘partisan citizenship’, to use McGregor and Chatiza’s term, in 2018 it was in the process of formalisation, i.e. the process of restoration of territorial order and state bureaucratic control), and rights to health, clean water, and sanitation of which many residents of Harare’s townships are deprived.

Peter’s situation is not unique: the potential exceptional position of some informal settlements with regards to availability of clean water as opposed to townships with their insufficient and dilapidated infrastructure and poor service delivery, became first noticeable during the 2008–2009 cholera outbreak (Chigudu, 2019). As Simukai Chigudu (*Ibid.*, p. 421) notes, some settlements, such as Hopley Farm, were not badly affected by the cholera outbreak. Hopley Farm was identified as a highly impoverished area as many people were moved there in the aftermath of Operation *Murambatsvina* in 2005 during which a lot of informal (or ‘illegal’) housing was destroyed. This designation allowed for the involvement of humanitarian and development organisations which provided water and sanitation facilities. In this particular case, in the context of the healthcare emergency, being disconnected from the state and the city infrastructure made people benefit from it as citizens as they were safer unlike those residents whose water was delivered by the city, and the impact of the deadly cholera outbreak was not as great in Hopley Farm as in regular high-density areas.

Other people who lived in informal settlements did not necessarily experience such benefits, but still did not perceive living in informal settlements as necessarily negative. Wendy, a female vendor, rented a room in Dzivarasekwa informal settlement (13 km from Harare) where she resided with her husband. She explained that it was ‘both formal and informal’ since

ZANU–PF and MDC–T had attempted to spread their influence in the area. For her, the active presence and control of political parties partially substituted for official institutions, and that was why she called this settlement partially formal: ‘but I don’t rely on parties because if you do, there is a danger [of political violence]. If you want to do anything about a political party, you just do it on your own and do not publish it. If you do, they [the other party] may come and evict you... So, life will be more difficult for you’. Wendy explained that she could support any political party as long as she did it silently because the setting was highly politicised. Before elections, for example, ZANU–PF members would go door to door asking to see voter registration slips. Not having one implied that you supported the MDC, which could cause you problems. She commuted from this settlement to Harare city centre almost every day to do vending because vending was the main economic activity in her area, and she could not make more than \$5 per day there. Commuting to Harare, she had to spend \$2 on transport and \$1 on food, but she still managed to earn a bit more since ‘marketing in town [was] more effective’. Her case also shows that despite partisan patronage networks, individuals can manage to find ways to manoeuvre in politicised spaces and to maintain their political loyalties after 2013. She said that meeting lawyers and receiving legal training through one of the informal sector organisations (Vendors’ Initiative for Social and Economic Transformation) had had a significant impact on her empowerment as a citizen with rights: ‘upgrading us with knowledge of knowing who you are that was quite good for me when they teach us about who you are, about your rights. Because some of us, we don’t even know, but you are a Zimbabwean citizen, so you’ve got your own rights [socio-economic as well as broader human rights]’.

Informal settlements developed into political patronage spaces from the late 1990s. Clientelism is often used in opposition to citizenship, meaning that it deprives people of political rights. However, the abovementioned cases have shown, firstly, that in the collapsed economy, informal settlements may offer an economic benefit to the poor in the informal sector who cannot afford formal housing. Secondly, patronage networks may protect one’s livelihood and

housing, which exist outside the state and city domains, from destructive political interventions. Thirdly, under certain circumstances, there is a possibility of navigating in a politicised environment and following one's political preferences and loyalties which, in essence, undermines patronage networks. ZANU–PF may have successfully used these sites for gaining electoral support (McGregor and Chatiza, 2019), but individual acts of disobedience and instances of political agency exercised by informal settlement residents had the potential of gradually eroding patronage networks in such areas, particularly after 2013 when ZANU–PF partially loosened its control. Fourthly, informal settlements have emerged as spaces for challenging the ongoing value of urban modernity – it is a notion that has become questionable amidst the collapsed economy, inadequate urban planning, and crumbling city infrastructure. Overall, although informal settlements around Harare have not turned into spaces of 'insurgent citizenship', they have been moving away from partisan citizenship sites through formalisation and loosening of patronage networks. Residence in informal settlements after 2013 has not necessarily deprived citizens of their right to the city. The narratives of my respondents show the opposite is possible: urban citizenship of people who live in such settlements may be strengthened. They have accessed cheap housing in these settlements, used the urban space to earn a living, and escaped the perils of the 'modern' life in Harare townships caused by dilapidated and inadequate infrastructure.

§6. CONCLUSION

This Chapter has sought to demonstrate the implications of economic informalisation for the notion of citizenship in Zimbabwe by looking at grassroots re-interpretations of citizenship in the informal sector rather than top-down, historical definitions enforced by politicians and planners. It has argued that economic informalisation, as well as other economic

and political processes linked to it, have had a profound impact on the understanding of citizenship.

It has singled out and considered six elements or foundations of urban citizenship: productivity, taxation, formal or informal work, and formal or informal residence. The analysis of these categories in the narratives of people in the informal sector demonstrates that the understanding of citizenship in Zimbabwe has undergone a major transformation under the influence of economic and political changes, many of which are shaped by the collapse of the 'modern' formal economy and bureaucratic state and the widespread economic informalisation that has followed. These changes have been slow to take root as many convictions people hold about the formal economy, respectability, and the modern city and state are rooted in the still powerful modernisation mindset stemming from the colonial and early post-colonial period.

However, people have re-interpreted some of these notions in the 2000s and especially since 2013. The Chapter has argued that the colonial and post-colonial notion of productivity has been debated in the context of the urban informal sector with individuals challenging the idea that a productive person is 'more of a citizen' in terms of social status and socio-economic rights than a vendor, for example. Taxation has been challenged as a core responsibility of a citizen, and individuals in the informal sector have argued for a reciprocal relationship with the government as they crave institutional and financial support for the informal sector. Informal sector actors have debated the notion of formal employment as grounds for 'respectability', higher social status, and greater socio-economic and political rights and suggested that in the worsening economic and financial situation it is people in the informal sector who have access to cash and can earn a living, hence, are better placed in society. Informal sector actors have also questioned whether residence in informal settlements has deprived them of urban citizenship. Some have used their informal settlement residence to escape the hazardous 'modern' features of the city, such as dilapidated water and sanitation infrastructure.

These developments show that citizenship is a highly dynamic and multi-dimensional concept and, under the impact of vast economic informalisation and related processes and in the course of people's adaptation to harsh economic and political conditions, citizenship contours have become blurred and are debated and re-negotiated continuously by informal sector actors. This has produced new forms of lived citizenship which challenge established modernist notions about taxation, productivity, formal residence, and formal employment as grounds for citizenship expressed through higher respect and social status and socio-economic and political rights and show that all these aspects may (or should) be negotiated and reviewed in the context of the great divide between the modernist mindset and survivalist reality.

CHAPTER 8.

CONCLUSION: CHANGING IDEAS AND PRACTICES OF CITIZENSHIP IN THE CONTEXT OF INFORMAL SECTOR LIVELIHOODS

§1. INTRODUCTION

The thesis looked at the impact of economic informalisation on lived citizenship ideas and practices of people with informal livelihoods in Harare. It discussed key issues, such as the impact of the economic crisis and particularly informalisation on society from the late 1990s, challenges to the modernist mindset and its disconnect from the reality which was dominated by economic survival mechanisms, and developments of challenges to modernist assumptions about citizenship.

This Chapter summarises and concludes the thesis. The first section discusses the argument of the thesis and provides an overview of the seven thesis Chapters. The second part takes a closer look at the core nexus discussed in the thesis: the great divide between the modernist mindset and survivalist reality and shifting contours of lived citizenship which challenges the modernist notions of citizenship that are still employed by the authorities and reproduced by society. Finally, the Chapter outlines the developments in lived citizenship of informal sector actors as well as approaches and policies of the government and local authorities to the informal sector after the 2017 coup and especially the 2018 elections when President Emmerson Mnangagwa's power was formally legitimised. It shows that major and adverse changes happened after the elections in the areas of politics and the informal sector and considers persecution of the political opposition and the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic as major factors that contributed to further marginalisation and victimisation of informal sector actors, although these themes require further research.

§2. ECONOMIC INFORMALISATION AND THE SHIFTING UNDERSTANDING AND EXPERIENCES OF CITIZENSHIP IN URBAN ZIMBABWE

The thesis sought to demonstrate the impact that radical economic informalisation after the late 1990s had on the ideas and practices of lived citizenship in Zimbabwe's urban informal sector. It argued that profound and unexpected economic informalisation led to a 'great divide' between the modernist thinking, which originated from the colonial and early post-colonial ideas and practices of urban planning, order, control, and lifestyle, and survivalist reality which most people in Harare had to face as the 'modern' ways of earning a living and supporting a family (i.e. the formal economy) disappeared and people had to resort to the informal sector as a means of survival. This disconnect, in its turn, led to people challenging and revising modernist notions of citizenship, such as productivity, formal employment and residence, and taxation. Although these changes have been slow and not teleological, they signify a shift in informal sector actors' understanding and practices of citizenship which both move away from modernist assumptions and attempt to incorporate them into the informal sector reality.

To analyse the impact of informalisation on lived citizenship, the thesis used a synthesis of three theoretical frameworks: the informal sector, citizenship, and the disconnect between modernist thinking and survivalist reality. These theoretical frameworks allowed us to see major social, economic and political shifts which happened in Harare in the course of economic informalisation which led to a major crisis of urban post-colonial modernity which in its turn, served as one of the foundations of lived citizenship. The rapid expansion of the informal sector triggered the great divide between the modernist thinking which underpinned the formal economy, urban planning, social, and political relations and survivalist reality. This gradually led to the transformations of ideas and practices of citizenship in which the notions of modernity were selectively employed and renegotiated by informal sector actors to speak to their economic reality.

Methodologically, the thesis was based on qualitative research methods and diverse data sources, such as interviews, documents, mass media and social media, and Zimdancehall compositions. The study focused on Harare, the capital and major urban centre in Zimbabwe where modernist urban ideals have been particularly strong from colonial times.

The thesis showed that from the foundation of Salisbury, colonial authorities and white elites enforced the notions of colonial urban modernity, control and order to ensure the control of the African labour force and political power, denying the right to the city to anyone who did not fit the criteria of modernity and respectability and whose labour was not required in the city. Middle-class Africans used the notions of modernity and respectability to make a claim to equal citizenship which, however, was denied as race was the primary foundation of citizenship, while many black labourers, women, and unemployed people engaged in activities that partly eroded these modernist top-down foundations of urban citizenship, such as informal trade and beer-brewing. After Independence, a similar pattern of challenging the top-down modernist criteria for full citizenship in Harare continued as the black majority government also restricted people's access to the city.

Owing to the economic costs of the implementation of the Economic Structural Adjustment Programme (ESAP) in the 1990s and the rapid expansion of economic informalisation from the late 1990s, the disconnect between the modernist mindset and reality became profound and had a strong impact on different spheres of social and political life in urban Zimbabwe. The crisis of modernising development resulted in people seeing the future of Zimbabwe in its past as many idealised the 1980s as times when 'things were good'. The disconnect was also expressed in the emergence and popularisation of the narrative of Harare no longer being the Sunshine City, for which street vendors and failed service delivery were blamed. The disconnect also affected the notions of work and led to a crisis of worker identity, as typically people did not see economic activities in the informal sector as work, and the crisis

of the education-employment nexus, as most university graduates could not find formal jobs anymore.

In the face of economic informalisation, political actors – government ministries, local authorities, and political parties – perpetuated the modernist narrative and mindset, attempted to restrict and control the informal sector, and extensively focused on the need to kickstart industries and (re-)formalise the economy at the expense of immediate improvements in the informal sector. The government and local authorities used biopolitical stigmatisation to further marginalise street vendors and limit their right to the city and to a livelihood. In this harsh economic and political environment some people chose to disengage from the state and to engage in survival and self-help politics and self-reliant citizenship practices instead. At the same time, they hoped for the return of the state in their lives in a productive and beneficial way and expected the government to revive the economy. As a part of this self-reliant citizenship which became the dominant form of lived citizenship in the context of economic informalisation, individuals in the informal sector engaged in adaptive resistance to withstand the oppressive and frequently harmful interventions of the government and local authorities in their livelihoods and as they navigated the politicised and contested terrains of the informal sector. In the context of the informal sector, other forms of lived citizenship, for example, insurgent citizenship, were less explicit due to highly repressive actions of the state and the need to provide for one's family.

Civil society actors, which were prominent political players and stood for citizens' and workers' rights, were also negatively affected by economic informalisation. Once strong trade unions lost their membership and a claim to collectivity and adopted an exclusive attitude to the informal sector (as is common for labour movements across the world). However, they remained concerned with work conditions and the rights of people in the informal sector and facilitated the establishment of the Zimbabwe Chamber of Informal Economy Associations (ZCIEA). Non-governmental organisations (NGOs) tried to reorient some of their activities to address the issues related to the informal sector, but the broader economic decline, donor

fatigue, and politicisation of civil society generally complicated their work. Churches and religious organisation also suffered in the course of informalisation. Donations decreased, and they introduced skills training, financial schemes, and psychological support to help the majority of their members who resorted to informal economic activities to earn a living. Popular protest movements were a new actor on the civic and political scene of the country and although many protests took place in the physical space of the informal sector, i.e. the streets, the approach of protest movements to the informal sector tended to be instrumental. Still, the activity of civil society actors laid the foundations for particular notions of citizenship which were later employed in the informal sector context: trade unions employed a collectivity-based and rights-based notion of citizenship, and NGOs, especially civics, – a rights-based understanding of citizenship.

Another new aspect of civil society, which bordered ‘un-civil’ (or political) society, was constituted by informal sector organisations (ISOs) which claimed to represent the informal sector. Associational life in the informal sector played an important role in the organisation, empowerment, and mutual support of individuals in the informal sector. ISOs engaged in a range of governmental and survival political tactics to challenge the marginalisation and stigmatisation of the informal sector by authorities. ISOs also played an important role in establishing individuals as self-reliant citizens and shaping distinct notions of this self-reliant citizenship that were grounded in the collective identities of ISOs. ZCIEA shaped a collectivity-based notion, similar to trade unions. Zimbabwe Informal Sector Organisation (ZISO) emphasised respectability as a source of citizenship. The National Vendors Union of Zimbabwe (NAVUZ) promoted a rights-based notion of citizenship similarly to mainstream NGOs. ZCIEA’s and ZISO’s notions of citizenship can be seen as variations of self-reliant citizenship, the dominant lived citizenship mode in the informal sector. NAVUZ’s rights-based citizenship, however, had elements of both self-reliant and insurgent citizenship, another kind of lived citizenship practised by informal sector actors, albeit more rarely.

Changes to the understanding of citizenship occurred not only within ISOs but in the informal sector in general as people engaged in challenging modernist foundations of citizenship and reinterpreting them to reflect their experiences in the informal sector. As economic informalisation affected people's modernist assumptions and drove them into a survivalist lifestyle, many people started thinking that the modernist foundations of citizenship were no longer applicable. The contours of citizenship in urban Zimbabwe were shifting as informal sector players debated the modernist pre-requisites for full citizenship, such as formal employment and residence, productivity, and taxation. As these foundations of citizenship had been imposed and embraced by people for decades, and people had not given up a desire for a return of a modern economy, city, and lifestyle, these changes were very slow and not always coherent. However, the fact that lived citizenship in the informal sector started to gradually erode the early post-colonial modernist foundations of citizenship shows that the modernist mindset could be revised and adapted to meet the reality of people's lives and livelihoods.

The lived citizenship framework is particularly helpful here as it allows us to see diverse practices and ideas of citizenship which have emerged in the informal sector in the context of the modernist mindset-survivalist reality disconnect caused by massive economic informalisation. It shows how modernist grounds of citizenship (taxation, productivity, formal residence and employment) are challenged and reinvented to accommodate the interests, experiences and needs of informal sector actors and how people make a claim to citizenship using these revisited notions. There is, however, have not been a consensus in the informal sector regarding any of these foundations of citizenship or the notions of post-colonial urban modernity as foundations of citizenship in the context of vast informalisation. Economic informalisation was a driving force that triggered a divide between the mindset preoccupied with the promise of urban modernity and the reality preoccupied with everyday survival, and citizenship became trapped in this conundrum.

§3. 'THE NATION OF VENDORS': CITIZENSHIP TRAPPED BETWEEN THE MODERNIST
MINDSET AND SURVIVALIST REALITY

For this thesis, I used a quote from Petina Gappah's (2009) short story *An Elegy for Easterly* as an epigraph. Describing the daily life of Easterly Farm inhabitants – women, men, and the youth, she summarised the whole country's experience: 'the country had become a nation of informal traders'. While Zimbabwe is predominantly agrarian, the shift from a national economy with a significant urban industrial sector to a national economy with a massive urban informal sector was an incredibly traumatic experience – traumatic not only with relation to people's livelihoods, incomes, living standard, welfare, and lifestyle but also in terms of self-perception as a nation and the crisis of urban modernity as a source of pride and a means of distinction of Zimbabwe from the rest of Africa. As Alois Mlambo (2017) noted, Zimbabwe gradually moved from an 'industrial powerhouse' to a 'nation of vendors'.

At Independence, Zimbabwe had a sophisticated and well-developed industrial sector which was second only to that of South Africa in Sub-Saharan Africa (Ibid.), and its contribution to the gross domestic product was 25% in 1975 (Stoneman, 1990, p. 247). It was concentrated mostly in Salisbury (47%) and Bulawayo (22%) (Seidman, 1982). Former Small and Medium Enterprises and Co-operative Development Minister Sithembiso Nyoni stressed that the government did not want Zimbabweans to become 'a nation of vendors' (see Chapter 4), but the tough rhetoric all too often clashed with the tough reality: the face of the nation now was a female street vendor, a cross-border trader, a youth with a stack of diplomas selling airtime on a street corner, a man making furniture in his backyard, and a child selling fruits. Pastor Evan Mawarire (Interview, 6 March 2018) who became one of the most prominent media and civic figures from 2016 noted:

[the] informal sector is what we have to look at to see what we had become as a nation despite all our resources, despite all our land, despite all our education, the informal sector is the reality, and you cannot deny it.... When the government comes with the propaganda... and paints a rosy picture [of economic development], we can just point at the informal sector [to prove that there were

no improvements]... The informal sector has become a mirror in which we should look to see what we have become as a nation.

If one focuses on urban Zimbabwe, it becomes clear that informality and resistance to informality have become some of the core and most pertinent characteristics of the nation. What does it mean for the understanding and experiences of citizenship in urban Zimbabwe?

The answer lies in the divide between the ideals of urban modernity and harsh economic reality. On the one hand, there is a need to let go of the colonial and early post-colonial modernist ideals because many of them are hard to find, implement, and live up to in the deep economic, social and political crisis. On the other hand, there is a desire to resolve the crisis, especially the economic crisis and fully return to that modernity. Many actions and inactions of the authorities and individuals result from the latter aspiration. City planners, for instance, thought that Harare was never meant to have such a large informal sector, and the urban crisis and the problems of proliferation of vendors in urban spaces would be resolved automatically once the economy improved (Interview with Priscilla Charumbira, 2 May 2018; with Phinneas Dohwe, 23 April 2018). However, the costs of running formal businesses in Zimbabwe is high for most people, and the business environment is not conducive for formal operation. As my respondent noted, 'it is expensive to do business in Zimbabwe' (Interview with Tsitsi Machingauta, 17 January 2018).

This Gordian knot can hardly be easily cut. Firstly, as Olúfemi Táíwò (2010) stressed, 'colonialism pre-empted modernity in Africa'. Colonial modernity was perpetuated and enforced in Zimbabwe for many decades: as Kudzai Chatiza from the Development Governance Institute (Interview, 9 February 2018) suggested, 'Mugabe was more European than African', and the impact of these notions of modernity on politics, governance, economy, and urban planning cannot be overestimated. Secondly, Zimbabweans have been proud of their urban modernity for decades and very much made it their own. The project of re-inventing the notions of modernity that would speak to the current reality would take many years of debates

and negotiations and must have grassroots sources rather than being imposed from the top, as has happened with the government's notions of urban citizenship (Dorman, 2015).

Shannon Morreira (2010) suggests that people viewed the informal sector as 'a pipeline to modernity' as in post-2000 many of Harare's 'modernities' were disappearing due to the crisis. The informal sector allowed a way to keep access to and pay for some of the important 'modernities', e.g. education and healthcare. As seen in Chapter 7, however, people have also started challenging the very notions of urban modernity, such as formal employment and 'proper' residence.

Some people make a case for the old notions of modernity to be practised in new ways in the informal sector. Edward and Masimba (Interview, 14 April 2018) were vendors operating from a parking lot near a supermarket in Avondale, a middle-class suburb. Both started vending in Harare during the liberation war. Edward later had a brief period of formal employment but returned to vending after the ESAP: 'from there, I started vending in Avondale. This one is my teacher [points to Masimba]. He told me "you must do this job... look presentable to the customers... dress smart to be presentable to the customers"'. They argued that it always possible to be modern and respectable as a vendor:

they [the government and local authorities] are saying that we are causing disease, we are causing cholera, whatever... they say, 'don't buy fruits from vendors, you will get cholera'... The customers who buy from us here, they won't get cholera, but if you go to town, there is some dirty water in the streets... people would just shit on the streets, and they don't clean it... If you go to town right now, it is very different from the place we are now, and it is very messy in town. But they say 'don't buy from vendors', they are doing that just to destroy the image of vendors for the customers not to buy from us and for us not to make a living... We do our business cleanly and nicely. Are we not smart here? Are we dirty? Are we not like someone from the office?... [Vendors in town] don't have time for that [maintaining a clean operating space] because most of the time they are looking out for the police to run away. If they do, it will be easy for the police to collect their belongings.

In their opinion, modernity was not determined by what business one was doing but by how one was doing it. For Edward and Masimba, informal sector activities could be as modern and respectable as formal jobs. Hence, their lived citizenship was shaped by modernity and

respectability notions detached from classic ‘modernist’ assumptions about citizenship (formal employment and residence, taxation, and productivity), but grounded in ‘modernist’ practices and behaviours: how one looks, speaks, behaves, and conducts business. They did not view vending as ‘un-modern’ by definition but rather argued that many operated in a ‘non-modern’ manner. Edward and Masimba made a case for vending as an income-generating activity equally modern, respectable and deserving to be treated as such to formal jobs, thus broadening the ‘modernist’ foundations of citizenship.

Reconsideration of the notions of modernity and respectability with regards to the informal sector may also be seen as a way to resolve the problem of delayed or even denied social adulthood. As seen in Chapters 2 and 3, in colonial Zimbabwe these notions were linked to gendered and racial identities, and social reproduction of modernity and respectability notions grounded in colonial and early post-colonial ideas and its clash with the drastic economic reality had a strong impact on the youth. As discussed above, from the late 1990s–early 2000s many young people faced social and personal challenges due to not being able to meet the social criteria of ‘proper’ adulthood, defined through employment and marriage, and seeing the inapplicability of their education and skills in widespread economic informalisation. Many of them ended up in what was called ‘waithood’ instead of ‘social adulthood’ (Gukurume, 2007; Honwana, 2013; Singerman, 2007). Jeremy Jones (2009) points out the problem of defining social adulthood in terms of marriage and household formation and gendered roles that young people are expected to perform in a family setting and society in general, such as an expectation of men to be breadwinners that became hard to fulfil due to the collapse of the formal sector. Revision of the notions of modernity and respectability in line with the new socio-economic situation, despite being slow, might eventually lead not only to changes in the contours of citizenship but also to shifts in patterns of social reproduction of these norms and relieve the social adulthood crisis that the youth face in Zimbabwe.

There is no clear opinion in urban Zimbabwe about whether the informal sector can be modern or not, whether informal sector players should pay income tax, whether formal urban residence is better than informal settlements, or whether a formal job is inherently better than the informal sector. Men and women, people with different levels of education, of different age, living in different areas of Harare, and having different specialisations may share any of these views because there is no clear modernity project in the aftermath of economic informalisation. In the course of such debates and negotiations among individuals, organisation, and authorities, citizenship acquires new contours which start drifting away from the notions of post-colonial urban modernity. The understandings of citizenship and practices of lived citizenship have become eclectic because the notions of modernity have been challenged and are under revision as they have not met the reality of the informal sector as a source of livelihood for too many people. The conditions which provide the grounds for these experiences of lived citizenship in the informal sector include post-colonial ‘modernist’ notions which served as grounds for particular experiences of citizenship, such as taxation, productivity, formal residence, and formal employment. However, if before prolonged economic informalisation these notions had clear modernist foundations and had the potential to enhance one’s experience of citizenship through more respect, higher social status, and more socio-economic and political rights, from 2013 these notions have been challenged by informal sector actors, negotiated, and revised as they did not reflect the reality that informal sector actors faced in the course of economic informalisation and accompanying social, economic and political processes. The process of challenging these modernist foundations of citizenship has, however, been slow, and by 2018 there was no universal interpretation of what urban modernity became in the course of economic informalisation. Neither has there been a clear universal interpretation of these foundations of citizenship which is why there are multiple experiences of lived citizenship within the informal sector which sometimes do not align despite similar circumstances people experience. The process of revising these foundations of citizenship in the context of the modernist mindset–survivalist reality divide is not rapid and is shaped by informal sector actors’

experiences and attitudes, economic development of the country, and broader political processes.

§4. NOTES ON THE INFORMAL SECTOR AND CITIZENSHIP IN THE POST-COUP ERA

Recalling the feelings that prevailed in Harare right after the coup, I would say that many people were hopeful from November 2017 until the 2018 elections, especially in comparison with my first fieldwork in June–September 2016. Individuals who relied on the informal sector for a livelihood were excited about the *Zimbabwe Is Open for Business* formula and anticipated a flow of investments, re-opening of industries, and subsequent formal employment. The end of the Mugabe era augured a shift towards economic growth, increase of incomes, gainful employment, and the return of modernity. The promise, however, was short-lived. Biopolitical stigmatisation of vendors under Emmerson Mnangagwa was as intense as under Mugabe. The victimisation of people in the informal sector was equally horrifying.

During the typhoid outbreak in January 2017, vendors were identified as a great evil and deliberately targeted once more. To counter the spread of this water-borne disease, the government and local authorities ordered a ban on fruit and vegetable vending in undesignated sites on the grounds that it represented a health hazard (Gumbo and Ruwende, 2017; Ruwende and Kakore, 2017; *New Zimbabwe*, 2017). Many vendors, however, resisted the ban as this economic activity was their only livelihood and they were ready to stand up for their right to earn a living (Matonho, 2017). After food vendors were ordered to cease operation within 48 hours on 10 January (Ruwende and Kakore, 2017), the City Council authorised the confiscation and destruction of the wares of those vendors who did not comply. The move was presented by the Council as a ‘necessary evil’ to counter the spread of the disease (Ruwende, 2017). If Adriana Petryna (2002) and Vinh-Kim Nguyen (2010) spoke of biological and therapeutic citizenship (see Chapter 1), this is the reverse side of that citizenship experience: people in the informal sector, particularly Central Business District (CBD) vendors have faced biopolitical

stigmatisation and been targeted as a biohazard and deprived of their livelihoods and, hence, a right to living. While they were trying to revise the modernist notions of citizenship and the right to the city, the top-down approach reinforcing the post-colonial urban modernity narrative crushed these attempts of informal sector actors to reclaim citizenship.

ZANU–PF’s response to major political opposition was highly repressive and cruel, and vendors, again, became victims. In 2019, after another spiral of protests, the government initiated a military crackdown on supposed opposition activists in Harare and beyond. This once again made vendors vulnerable to harassment, arrests, and corruption. Many vendors lost their wares, and informal trade in some parts of the country became virtually impossible (*NewsDay*, 2019). In this case, vendors were treated as ‘lesser citizens’ and deprived of their livelihoods again. In similarity with Operation *Murambatsvina* which, as discussed in Chapter 3, was partly understood as a top-down imposition of modernist citizenship notions grounded in productivity and the rural–urban divide, and partly as a punishment to urban areas for their support of the opposition, the 2019 crackdown had the elements of both of these approaches – it was the punishment of both the opposition and informal sector actors.

Once the COVID-19 pandemic reached Zimbabwe, biopolitical stigmatisation and oppression of individuals in the informal sector acquired another dimension. During the lockdown, when the vast majority of vendors stayed at home due to the restrictions, the local authorities supported by the government carried out another clean-up campaign destroying all ‘illegal’ structures which street vendors and informal traders used for their economic activities, such as makeshift shops and market stalls (Mukeredzi, 2020). It was reported that the Minister of State for Provincial Affairs (Harare Metropolitan) Oliver Chidawu and Harare Mayor Herbert Gomba claimed that ‘[t]he aim of the operation was to remove illegal businesses and ensure that cities are “clean, orderly and well-managed” while also making sure councils don’t lose out on potential revenue’ (Ibid.). The operation was harshly criticised by vendors’ advocates and ISOs. For instance, the leader of the Vendors’ Initiative for Social and Economic

Transformation (VISET) Samuel Wadzai noted that millions of vendors were left without livelihoods and had significant financial losses due to the demolitions (Ibid.). When the local authorities started destroying unauthorised vending facilities in April 2020, ZCIEA issued a statement condemning the move. They argued:

[w]henver there is an outbreak, either cholera or typhoid informal economy workers and traders are blamed as the causes of such outbreaks, now we have COVID-19 they are victims again, their stalls are being destroyed. Why is the public health war on COVID-19 pandemic becoming a war on the livelihoods of the vulnerable urban poor dependent on informal trading for their livelihoods?

In June 2020, the government used troops and police to control access to the CBD in an attempt to minimise the spread of the disease. Only healthcare and government workers were allowed to enter the city centre. However, the MDC argued that it was, first and foremost, a move to suppress protests and harass opposition activists as such measures were not introduced in other cities (*Reuters*, 2020). Regardless of the motivation behind this, street vendors and informal traders who operated in the CBD were deprived of their already precarious livelihoods once more.

COVID-19 had a profound impact on individuals who engaged in informal economic activities besides informal trade and street vending. In July 2020, during the lockdown, cross-border traders appealed for special permits to cross the border legally as many cross-border traders had to border jump in order to get to South Africa to buy goods for sale in Zimbabwe. The Bulawayo Vendors and Traders Association noted that although the government measures were reasonable in tackling the spread of COVID-19, many cross-border traders still left and entered the country illegally as they had to earn a living and suggested that the government come up with a plan to issue permits for cross-border traders for certain time periods (Dube, 2020). When the lockdown was lifted and borders with neighbouring countries opened in December 2020, cross-border traders resumed their activity, although the costs of mandatory COVID-19 tests were too expensive for most of them. However, the Zimbabwe Cross-Border

Traders Association negotiated a better deal with a Bulawayo-based laboratory and reduced the cost of testing from US\$60 to US\$15 (Muponde, 2020).

A new lockdown was introduced in January 2021 and the local authorities in Harare supported a ban on street vending and operation of combis (commuter omnibuses), particularly those coming through the CBD (Chidakwa, 2021). Of course, many informal sector players defied it as informal economic activities were their only source of livelihood, and they had to eke out a living and provide for their families despite the dangerous healthcare situation and threats of arrest (Munyoro, 2021).

Overall, the informal sector faced new waves of oppression, stigmatisation, and marginalisation after the 2018 elections. They were punished for being visibly present in the city centre, and they were accused of building ‘illicit’ facilities for themselves, not paying fees to the local authorities, supporting the opposition, and being a health hazard. One of the last challenges – the COVID-19 pandemic and restrictions aimed at stopping the spread of the virus as well as actions of the government and local authorities aimed at ‘maintaining order’, such as demolitions of unauthorised vending stalls, made already vulnerable socio-economic groups who relied on the informal sector as a primary source of livelihood even more vulnerable. All this shows that the experiences of citizenship in the informal sector continue to both change and remain the same. After the 2018 elections, they have become even more related to adaptive resistance and negotiation of the notions of urban modernity. The questions remain as to whether and how long it will take to abandon the ‘old’ modernity ideals, what new informal sector notions of urban modernity will be like, and how the ideas and practices of citizenship in the urban informal sector will change under these further socio-political transformations.

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INTERVIEWS

Informant	Occupation/Position/Affiliation	Date
Aaron Nyabanda	Glenview Informal Sector Association Chairperson	27 July 2016
Abigail	Vendor, NAVUZ member	1 September 2016
Admire	Unemployed Youth Organisation member, MDC member	14 March 2018
Agatha	Recent graduate, buys and sells shoes and jewellery	26 March 2018
Akmore Kori	Outgoing National Coordinator, Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace	7 March 2018
Alice	Vendor, cross-border trader, member of ZCIEA	17 August 2016
Alicia	Cross-border trader and informal trader	25 March 2018
Alisen Moffat	Harare City Councillor, ward 34 (Mufakose)	7 September 2016
Anna	Vendor, member of the Glenview Informal Sector Association	27 July 2016
Anonymous members	Zimbabwe Union of Drivers and Conductors	4 May 2018
Ashleigh Pfunye	ZINASU Secretary General	7 February 2018
Barnabas Ndira	Harare City Councillor, ward 21 (Mabvuku)	2 September 2016
Bella Matambanadzo	Feminist, executive director of Women's Resource Centre and Network	14 February 2018

Bernard Manyenyeni	Mayor of Harare, Councillor, ward 17 (Mt Pleasant)	5 September 2016
Bongani	Combi conductor	4 May 2018
Brighton	Informal service provider (car washing)	14 May 2018
Caesar Zvayi	<i>Herald</i> editor	3 May 2018
Charity Mandishona	National Chairperson, Women's Assembly, ZCIEA	13 March 2018
Charles	Chef; hustler	5 January 2018
Charles Chidagu	Glenview Informal Sector Association trustee	29 August 2016
Charles Nyatsuro	Harare City Councillor, ward 6 (Harare Central)	30 August 2016
Christopher Mweembe	Caritas National Coordinator	5 March 2018
Claire	Cross-border trader	1 August 2016
Clever Bere	Former ZINASU President (2008–2010)	21 February 2018
Danai	Fully anonymous respondent from the City of Harare	2 May 2018
Danai Mabuto-Kudya	Advocacy and Legal Advice Centres Team Leader, Transparency International Zimbabwe	8 September 2016
David	Member of the Glenview Informal Sector Association	27 July 2016
Davis Mambure	Senior pastor (Epworth), True Word Church International	24 April 2018

Dzimbabwe	Lawyer, Zimbabwe Lawyers for Human Rights	24 August 2016
Chimbga		
Earnest Mudzengi	Former NCA National Director (2006–2010), Media Centre Executive Director	2 August 2016; 22 January 2018
Eddie Cross	Member of Parliament (2008–2013; 2013–2018); MDC Secretary for Economics (2000); Shadow Minister of Local Government	1 March 2018
Edward and Masimba	Vendors operating from a shopping centre’s parking lot	14 Apr 2018
Eldred Masunungure	Mass Public Opinion Institute Executive Director	2 August 2016; 2 February 2018
Elias Mudzuri	Former Harare Mayor	17 April 2018
Elijah Mutemeri	Head of the ZCTU Informal Economy Desk	5 March 2018
Emma	Urban poultry farmer, vendor, cross-border trader	1 May 2018
Eric, Takudzwa, Timothy	Informal furniture manufacturers in Glenview	12 April 2018
Evan Mawarire	Pastor; civic activist; #ThisFlag founder	6 March 2018
Farai Mutambanengwe	SME Association of Zimbabwe founder and executive officer	10 May 2018
Farai Mutamiri	Dean, Anglican Church Diocese of Harare	6 March 2018
Fibion Kufahakutizvi	Harare City Councillor, ward 19 (Mabvuku)	9 April 2018
Fiona Magaya	Head of the ZCTU’s Dept of Education, Training, Women, and Gender	9 March 2018

Fortune Gwaze	Political Researcher at the Zimbabwe Democracy Institute	3 August 2016
Francis Rwodzi	Youth Agenda Trust's former director	10 February 2018
Frederick Chiromba	Secretary General, Zimbabwe Catholic Bishops' Conference	1 March 2018
Freeman	Artist; collects and delivers borehole water	30 April 2018
Funny Machipisa	Districts Administration Manager, City of Harare	2 May 2018
George	Vendor, NAVUZ member	1 September 2016
Gibson	Anonymous informant from a residents' association	6 April 2018
Gift Ostallos Siziba	#Tajamuka spokesperson; former president (2014–2015) of ZINASU's University of Zimbabwe branch	13 February 2018
Gladys Kanyongo	SMEDCO's chief executive officer	9 May 2018
Glenda	Producer, vendor, ZISO member	16 August 2016
Godfrey Kanyenze	Economist; LEDRIZ Director	12 August 2016; 18 January 2018
Golden Kofa	ZCIEA's national information officer,	25 August 2016
Hannah	Cross-border and domestic trader, member of ZISO	16 August 2016
Hazel	Producer, Vendor, member of ZISO	16 August 2016
Helen	Producer, member of ZISO	16 August 2016
Herbert	NAVUZ member	9 May 2018
Herbert Gomba	Harare City councillor, ward 27 (Glen Norah)	10 April 2018; 16 April 2018

Hilary	Vendor, Member of the Glenview Informal Sector Association	29 August 2016
Hilary and Janis	Anonymous leaders of an informal sector organisation	1 August 2016
Holly	Vendor, member of ZCIEA	22 August 2016
Hope	Street vendor in Mbare and cross-border trader	5 January 2018
Hope Chigudu	Feminist activist and co-founder of the Zimbabwe Women's Resource Centre and Network	21 February 2018
Hopewell Gumbo	Social justice activist; ZINASU's former president (1998–2000)	13 February 2018
Innocent	Vendor, NAVUZ member	1 September 2016
Innocent and Theresa	Traders from Mabvuku	10 April 2018
Innocent Chitanda	Union for Development of Apostolic and Zionist Churches in Zimbabwe Africa, programmes officer	26 April 2018
Isaac Fernandez	Jesuit priest, St Peter's Mbare	17 April 2018
Ishmail Kauzani	Chairperson of the Unemployed Youth Organisation; #Tajamuka activist	1 March 2018
Itai	Informal service provider (wedding choreographer)	14 May 2018
James	Tuck shop owner; ZCIEA member	28 August 2016
Japhet Moyo	ZCTU Secretary General	28 July 2016; 22 January 2018
John	Vendor; NAVUZ member	1 September 2016

Joice Mujuru	Former Vice-President (2004–2014); leader of the National People’s Party	14 September 2016; 7 May 2018
Jonah Gokova	ZIMCODD Founding Chairperson; Ecumenical Centre for Social Justice	6 February 2018
Joseph and Faith	Vendors, ZCIEA members, Tafara residents	8 March 2018
Joseph Rose	Harare City Councillor, ward 20 (Tafara)	2 September 2016; 30 April 2018
Joshua	Engaged in odd jobs – selling second-hand clothes and urban agriculture	30 April 2018
Kissmore	Glenview Informal Sector Association Chairperson	29 August 2016
Kuda	Unemployed graduate; cell phones vendor	26 February 2018
Kudakwashe	Vendor, NAVUZ member	1 September 2016
Kudzai Chatiza and Tapiwa Nyamukapa	Development Governance Institute	9 February 2018
Lawrence and Rutendo	Budiriro residents, backyard vendors	12 April 2018
Leo Chamahwinya	ZIMRIGHTS lawyer	1 February 2018
Lilian Timveas	MDC–T National Executive; Senator	9 May 2018
Linda Masarira	Human rights defender and political activist	6 February 2018
Lisa	Informal baker	23 March 2018
Lloyd Sachikonye	Professor, Institute of Development Studies, University of Zimbabwe	7 September 2016
Lorraine Sibanda	ZCIEA President	10 May 2018

Lovemore	former President (2007) of ZINASU's	28 February 2018
Chinoputsa	University of Zimbabwe Student Representative Committee; former ZINASU Secretary General (2008–2009); MDC–T's Youth Assembly Secretary General	
Lovemore Madhuku	NCA's founding member; law professor, University of Zimbabwe	23 January 2018
Lucia Chinyamakobvu	ZCIEA Harare Chapter secretary	18 August 2016
Mairos	Vendor; NAVUZ member	1 September 2016
Mairos Masamba	ZISO Coordinator	15 August 2016
Makomborero Haruzivishe	Former ZINASU University of Zimbabwe Student Representative Committee Secretary General (2012–2014); former ZINASU Secretary General (2016–2017)	27 February 2018
Margaret Mutsamvi	Executive Director, Economic Justice for Women	8 February 2018
Maria	Vendor; NAVUZ member	1 September 2016
Marvellous Kumalo	Ex-Director, Chitungwiza Residents Trust; Director, Chitungwiza and Manyame Rural Residents Association	30 August 2016; 26 January 2018
Mfundo Mlilo	Combined Harare Residents' Association Executive Director	23 January 2018
Michael	Vendor; Mabvuku-Tafara Informal Traders Association's member	2 September 2016

Misheck Gondo	National Association of Youth Organisations Executive Director	25 January 2018
Molly	Vendor; ZISO member	16 August 2016
Moreblessing	Cross-border trader, ZCIEA member	1 May 2018
Morgan and Michael	Informal carpenters from Glenview 8 area	12 April 2018
Morgan Komichi	Chairperson, MDC-T; Member of Parliament	27 April 2018
Moses	Member of the Management Committee of home industry in Glenview 8 complex	12 April 2018
Mudiwa	Anonymous informant from a governmental financial institution	8 May 2018
Munya	Former informal processed meat producer, perspective tuck shop operator	27 March 2018
Munyaradzi Gwisai	Lawyer; University of Zimbabwe lecturer; International Socialist Organization in Zimbabwe General Coordinator; former Member of Parliament (2000–2002); former MDC member	15 March 2018
Nelia Watyoka and Grace Mario Masamba	National Chairperson and National Secretary, National Cross-Border and Domestic Traders Association	2 August 2016
Netsai	Vendor; NAVUZ member	1 September 2016
Nqobizitha Mlambo	Coalition of Unemployed Graduates Coordinator; #ThisGown activist	19 February 2018
Nyasha	Vendor	29 December 2017

Nyasha Muchichwa	Economist Researcher, LEDRIZ	17 August 2016
Obert Masaraure	Former ZINASU President (2010–2011); Rural Teachers Union President	12 February 2018
Olivia Chikunichawa	NAVUZ Programmes Director	22 August 2016
Oscar	Manufacturer; ZISO member	16 August 2016
Pamela Mhlanga	Zimbabwe Women’s Resource Centre and Network executive director	5 February 2018
Paul Muchena	Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace National Coordinator	6 March 2018
Pedzisai Ruhanya	Zimbabwe Democracy Institute Director	28 July 2016
Peter and Mike	Vendors operating from a shopping centre area	14 April 2018
Peter Magada	City of Harare Quantity Surveyor	3 May 2018
Phinneas Dohwe	City planner; Zimbabwe Institute of Regional and Urban Planners President	23 April 2018
Precious Shumba	Harare Residents’ Trust Director	1 February 2018
Pride Mkono	Former ZINASU President (2011–2013); Crisis in Zimbabwe Coalition Chairperson	2 February 2018
Priscilla Charumbira	City of Harare city planner	2 May 2018
Promise Mkwanzani	Former ZINASU President (2006–2007); former MDC Youth Assemble Secretary General (2010–2014); ZISO Director; former #Tajamuka Spokesperson (2016– 2017); civic and political activist	30 July 2016; 28 January 2018
Prosper	Vendor	23 March 2018

Raymond Majongwe	Progressive Teacher's Union of Zimbabwe Secretary General	15 March 2018
Raymond Sango	Socialist; former student leader; former ZINASU Harare Province Chairperson, Zimbabwe National Students Union	14 February 2018
Rose	Cross-border trader and vendor; ZCIEA member	19 August 2016
Rosewita Katsande	Youth Empowerment and Transformation Trust Executive Director	7 March 2018
Rudo Chafa	Boost Fellowship intern	5 September 2016
Runako	NAVUZ member	9 May 2018
Sakhile Sifelani Ngoma	Women in Politics Support Unit Executive Director	5 February 2018
Sally Ncube (Dura)	Women's Coalition of Zimbabwe National Coordinator	13 February 2018
Samuel Wadzai	Vendors' Initiative for Social and Economic Transformation Executive Director	11 August 2016; 16 April 2018
Sekayi	Carpenter; previously formally employed	14 May 2018
Sesel Zvidzai	Deputy Minister of Local Government and Urban Development, MDC-T; Member of Parliament	13 September 2016; 28 February 2018
Simbarashe	Vendor	23 April 2018
Simbarashe Moyo	Combined Harare Residents' Association Chairperson	5 September 2016

Solomon Zwana.	Former Zimbabwe Council of Churches Secretary General (2009–2014); Presiding Bishop of the Methodist Church	20 February 2018
Sophie	Masseuse, cross-border trader	10 March 2018
Special Zuze	Harare City Councillor, ward 26 (Highfield), Informal Sector Committee Chairperson	13 April 2018
Spiwe Guwa	Mabvuku-Tafara Traders Association Leader	2 September 2016
Stacey	Producer, member of ZISO	16 August 2016
Stanelake Nyakudya and Lucia Chinyamakobvu	ZCIEA Harare Territory Chairperson and Harare Chapter Secretary	18 August 2016
Stellah	Farmer and vendor; Budiriro resident	11 April 2018
Sten Zvorwadza	NAVUZ Chairperson; political activist	12 August 2016; 30 August 2016; 8 January 2018; 13 January 2018
Stephen ‘Sarkozy’ Chuma	MDC–T Student Council National Chairperson	27 February 2018
Sydney Chirombe	Harare City Councillor, ward 33 (Budiriro)	11 April 2018
Tanaka	Former economist of the Ministry of Small and Medium Enterprises and Cooperative Development	10 May 2018
Tania	Vendor	29 December 2017

Tapiwa Mashakada	MDC–T Secretary for Finance and Economic Affairs; Member of Parliament	14 March 2018
Tara	Former informal trader in second-hand clothing	21 February 2018
Tendai	Media worker; ZCIEA member	28 August 2016
Tendai Biti	Lawyer; former MDC Secretary General (2000–2005); former MDC–T Secretary General (2005–2014); Member of Parliament (2000–2014); former Minister of Finance (2009–2013); former People’s Democratic Party President (2015–2017)	11 March 2018
Tendai Bobo	ZIMCODD programmes officer	5 September 2016; 16 April 2018
Tendai Chirau	ZANU–PF Youth League leader	30 April 2018
Tererai Obey Sithole	ZISO Programmes Coordinator	5 August 2016
Thabang Nare	Bulawayo Vendors and Traders Association Coordinator	29 August 2016
Timothy Kondo	Trade union educator	8 February 2018
Tinashe	Unemployed graduate; vendor at Mupedzanamo second-hand clothing market in Mbare	5 January 2018
Tinotenda	Former vendor	27 February 2018
Tonderai	Former vendor; former political activist in Mbare; civil servant	21 December 2017

Tsitsi	Vendor	29 December 2017
Tsitsi Machingauta	Founder of the Women's Farming Syndicate Zimbabwe	17 January 2018
Tungamirai	Harare City Councillor, Ward 32 (Glenview)	27 June 2016
Madzokere		
Value Mgagara, James Munemo and Henry Kane	NAVUZ executive director and staff members	2 August 2016
Vimbai, Chiedza, Tichaona and Israel Mabhoo	NAVUZ members and NAVUZ board member	20 April 2018
Vince	Patches potholes in Budiriro	11 April 2018
Vincent Musewe	Independent economist; former Finance and Economic Secretary, People's Democratic Party	16 September 2016; 1 March 2018
Wadzanai Vere	Self-Help Development Foundation Executive Director; NANGO National Chairperson	22 February 2018
Wellington	Producer, ZISO member	16 August 2016
Wendy	Vendor	23 April 2018
Will	Vendor	26 March 2018
William	Vendor, urban farmer, ZCIEA member	22 August 2016
William Makananzi	City of Harare Operation Officer (Markets)	2 May 2018

Wilton Janjazi	Harare City Councillor, Ward 38 (Kuwadzana), former Head of the Informal Sector Committee of the City Council	1 August 2016; 11 May 2018
Wisborn Malaya	ZCIEA Secretary-General	28 July 2016; 24 August 2016; 17 January 2018
Zachariah Godi	Counseling Services Unit's senior programmes officer	18 August 2016
Zakeyo Mtimtema	ZCTU's legal advisor	30 January 2018

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