

# **PRO-POOR INTERVENTIONS FOR LOCAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT: THE CASE FOR SECTORAL TARGETING**

Christian M. Rogerson

University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg

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## **INTRODUCTION**

In international debates about planning for local economic development (LED) there is increased discussion about the existence of a growing degree of “convergence” in policy prescriptions across both developed and developing countries. Although the context for LED policy in the South is viewed as different from that prevailing in the developed North (Helmsing, 2001a, 2001b, 2001c), recent international research on LED planning points to “a considerable convergence of policy prescriptions among the developed nations and, increasingly among developing nations as well” (Glasmeier, 2000, pp. 559-60). Indeed, according to Glasmeier (2000) the mainstream convergence is upon a set of “neo-liberal” development prescriptions. The trend towards a convergence is to be explained by the fact that LED planning worldwide now requires the preparation of policy frameworks that recognise the major economic and social trends that affect local economies, including globalisation, the internationalisation of trade and commerce as well as shifting employment dynamics. Illustratively, it is observed that the latest policy trends of LED in the South “cannot be exclusively local but must take into account the position and the positioning of territorial production systems within a local-global context” (Helmsing, 2001b, p. 304).

Internationally, the scope of mainstream interventions surrounding urban-based LED has been delineated in an influential review by Vidler (1999) as centred around several common themes. Overall, the four leading edges of urban LED interventions are seen as concerning the promotion of the competitiveness of localities, particularly through the attraction of inward investment, the enhancement of growth through implementing property-led city improvements, supporting ‘job creation from the inside’ in terms of business retention or assisting small enterprise development (SMME) and finally, supporting a range of community development initiatives, including community enterprises or cooperatives (Vidler, 1999). Taken together these four forms of LED

interventions represent the major areas of ‘neo-liberal’ policy convergence concerning planning for LED in urban areas.

Looked at a more fine-grained level of analysis the extent of this proclaimed convergence in LED planning might be questioned, particularly as concerning issues of poverty alleviation. Although the need to address issues of poverty alleviation is often alluded to within LED planning for cities in North America or Western Europe, especially in relation to cases of economic regeneration and of targeted area improvements (Vidler, 1999), across the developed world it is rare for anti-poverty measures to be the prime defining axis in LED planning. By contrast, in the developing world, the extent, depth and growth of poverty in cities inevitably forces questions of poverty alleviation much higher onto the LED policy agenda. Several researchers draw attention to a variety of municipal approaches towards addressing poverty alleviation which must be viewed as incipient elements of LED planning in developing world cities (Wegelin and Borgman, 1995; Vanderschueren *et al*, 1996; Wegelin, 1996; Rogerson, 1999). Overall, it is becoming apparent that, across urban areas of the developing world, there is growing recognition of the imperative for evolving a pro-poor focus in LED planning. This marked trend towards an explicit pro-poor focus is now precipitating an element of policy *divergence* in the international context of LED planning and the increased distinctiveness of LED planning in the urban developing world. Put simply, in a growing number of cases in the developing world, it is evident that the emphasis in LED planning is more weighted towards incorporating pro-poor LED interventions than ordinarily is the case in the developed world.

Against this wider backdrop of debates concerning LED policy convergence, this paper examines the directions of pro-poor LED interventions in the urban developing world. More specifically, the focus is upon LED planning which aims to redress urban poverty in South Africa. Within the developing world South Africa often is considered a leader or pioneer in terms of its planning interventions for LED. The analysis is structured in terms of three uneven sections of analysis. In the first section, debates are reviewed concerning LED and urban poverty and of the growth of pro-poor LED interventions. This leads into the second section in which the distinctive South African pro-poor framework for LED is traced. In section three the focus

narrows to the example of the city of Johannesburg. In Johannesburg it is shown that the city's LED planning acknowledges the importance of *sectoral targeting* for LED support which aims at enhancing growth and competitiveness of certain sectors in the urban economy (Greater Johannesburg Metropolitan Council [GJMC], 2001). It is contended here that the approach of sectoral targeting can be applied equally to enhance the objectives for a pro-poor LED in the city and more broadly for LED planning in the developing world. In the final section, this argument is extended through examining the potential offered by three different economic sectors in which targeted LED support by Johannesburg authorities might yield a high impact in terms of poverty alleviation. The selected sectors are those of (1) urban agriculture as an example of support for the informal economy; (2) the inner-city clothing industry; and, (3) the tourism economy.

### **TOWARDS PRO-POOR LED: INTERNATIONAL DEBATES**

In this section, the aim is twofold. First, is to locate pro-poor LED interventions as part of a wider range of LED interventions that have been recognised in international research on LED. The second task is to introduce the theme of pro-poor LED and range of municipal interventions that have been highlighted in international writings

#### *From Pro-Growth to Pro-Poor LED*

Across the international experience, the range of LED initiatives and responses in cities can take a combination of many forms. Different authors apply different terminology to describe the variety of forms of LED interventions. Nevertheless, there exists a spectrum of LED interventions ranges from those which are seen as market-led or pro-growth on the one hand to those which are market-critical or pro-poor on the other hand. The *market-led approach of business development* aims “to enable local economies to adjust more successfully to macro-economic reforms” (Scott and Pawson, 1999) and emphasises the goals of promoting individual self-reliance, entrepreneurship, expansion of the market, competitiveness, reduction of unemployment and sustainable growth. By contrast, the *market-critical approach of community development* represents a bottom-up approach geared to goals of achieving local self-reliance, empowerment, participation, local cooperation, and environmental sustainability (Scott and Pawson, 1999).

Three important international works can be used to extend the understanding of this spectrum of LED interventions. First, based upon an extended analysis of LED interventions in North American cities, the work of Clarke and Gaile (1998) defines several broad policy categories of LED intervention, which exemplify the market-led approach towards LED in cities. Five major categories of LED intervention are differentiated by Clarke and Gaile (1998), viz., (1) locational (general tax incentives, enterprise zones, industrial parks), (2) pro-globalization (sister cities programmes, export promotion, foreign trade zones, attracting international direct investment), (3) general entrepreneurial (venture capital provision, targeted tax incentives), (4) entrepreneurial mercantile (business incubators, equity participation, local development corporations) and (5) human capital (employment training, human capital initiatives). Notably absent from this North American derived schema of LED interventions is any category of poverty-focussed LED interventions.

In a second further categorization, the World Bank (2001, 2002a, 2002b) suggests the following ten issues as representative of the most important and frequent sets of LED interventions:

- ensuring that the local investment climate is functional for local enterprises
- supporting small and medium sized enterprises
- encouraging new enterprises
- attracting inward investment
- investing in physical (hard) infrastructure by improving the built environment (roads, sewerage, airports) for businesses
- investing in soft infrastructure including human resource development, institutional support and regulatory issues
- supporting the growth of business clusters
- targeting particular geographical areas for regeneration or growth (ie area or spatial targeting)
- supporting survivalist, primarily informal sector enterprise
- targeting certain disadvantaged groups.

Across urban areas, the World Bank interprets the role of such LED initiatives as important dimensions of so-termed “city development strategies” (World Bank, 2002c). The notion of city development strategies represents one of the prime foundations of the World Bank’s new global urban and local government strategy (GHK Group, 2000; World Bank, 2000). The approach involves the building of broad coalitions of local stakeholders and development partners, both national and international, to work together in order to design a strategy for a particular urban area that reflects a broadly shared understanding of the locality’s socio-economic structure, constraints and prospects and a shared or holistic vision of goals, priorities and requirements (World Bank, 2002c). It is suggested that the city development strategy in combination with LED contribute to sustainable cities by assisting local governments to pursue good practices in building environments that are liveable, competitive, well-governed or managed and bankable, in terms of being financially sound (see World Bank, 2000, pp. 46-52). According to the Bank’s urban and local government strategy the sustainable development of communities or localities is based on the “concept that economic vitality, social equity, environmental quality and sustainable urban finance are goals collectively integral” for the creation of sustainable cities. The attainment of all four of these goals is viewed as contingent upon “responsible and successful local economic development action” (World Bank, 2001, p. 10). The ten areas for LED intervention that are identified by the World Bank must be viewed as spanning a spectrum of interventions from market-led or pro-business on the one hand to market-critical or pro-poor LED on the other hand.

Finally, another useful definition of the scope of LED policy interventions is offered in the works of Helmsing (2001a, 2001b, 2001c). Within the international literature on LED, the writings of Helmsing are distinctive for they are rooted upon an extensive analysis of LED practice in Africa, Asia and Latin America rather than upon the developed North. Based upon the record of LED in the South, Helmsing (2001a, 2001c) draws a distinction between three main forms or categories of LED initiatives. First, are a set of actions that might be broadly described as *community-based economic development*. In the activities of community-based development the core focus “is to facilitate household diversification of economic activity as the principal way to improve livelihood and reduce poverty and vulnerability” (Helmsing, 2001a, p. 8). For example, much support for survivalist or home-based informal enterprise would fall into this type of LED intervention. Second, are a group of initiatives that surround *business or*

*enterprise development*. Within this broad category are encompassed a suite of initiatives that would directly target support at either individual enterprises or at enterprise clusters. It is emphasized that “in contrast to community economic development, this category is premised on specialisation and overcoming obstacles towards specialisation in a market context” (Helmsing, 2001a, p. 8). Enterprise development would focus upon enhancing the trajectory for growth amongst small, medium and large enterprises. This support could be to individual small enterprises but more generally would build upon the need for collective support of enterprises in the form of clusters. The third category relates to what is described as *locality development*. The concept of locality development is viewed as complementary to both the first two categories of interventions and refers to the overall planning and management of economic and physical development of localities. Indeed, the concept of locality development is primarily interpreted as about the planning and realisation of infrastructures and of relevant economic and social capital (Helmsing, 2001c, p. 10).

Overall, it is clear that pro-poor LED is not highlighted in North American based studies. In addition, whilst the role of LED in poverty alleviation is given due acknowledgement in the influential World Bank analyses, it is not a theme which is placed at the center of LED planning. By contrast, in works which focus squarely on the developmental problems of the South, such as those of Helmsing (2001a, 2001b), the direct contribution that localities and local governments can make to poverty alleviation is given considerable direct focus.

#### *Pro-poor LED in Cities*

The international experience shows that local authorities can play a pivotal LED role through stimulating initiatives for poverty alleviation. The potential significance of such ‘meso-scale’ anti-poverty approaches is based upon, *inter alia*, municipal level responsibilities for the provision and coordination of local services, for the facilitation of community poverty initiatives, for the issuance of building permits, and for local licensing of commercial and transport activities (Wegelin, 1996). It is argued that municipalities are strategically well-placed to undertake local long-term planning in the area of poverty alleviation particularly in association with the private sector, NGOs and CBOs (Pieterse, 2000). Moreover, it is a function of local governments to generate and

manage local projects whose aim is to address inequalities between citizens as well as mediating the public good through ‘good governance’ (Matovu, 2002).

Several broad intervention areas are identified in terms of LED initiatives for poverty alleviation (Wegelin and Borgman, 1995; Vanderschueren *et al*, 1996; Wegelin, 1996). More especially, key areas of municipal policy intervention are identified as relating to (1) regulatory frameworks, (2) access to municipal services, and (3) employment creation. The prime thrust of these policy interventions has been to augment the asset base of the urban poor or to enhance their capacity to manage their existing asset base (Moser, 1996; Rogerson, 1999). First, it is recognized that the regulatory framework that shapes the lives of the poor is established by both central and local governments and is designed to apply nationally and locally. Essentially, the regulatory framework sets the parameters for development in general but more specifically for the municipal environment. The regulatory framework comprises a wide sweep of laws, including local government laws, ordinances, legislation and regulations related to town planning, public health, building and land development (Vanderschueren *et al*, 1996). The development of a regulatory environment that supports the livelihoods of poor communities is an important LED initiative. In particular, access to land for housing is critical and most urban governments exert a strong influence on which groups in the city can obtain land for housing both through what they do in terms of regulation and what they do not do. Indeed, there is an important link between access to housing and livelihoods as regards providing ready access to income-earning opportunities and servicing as a space for home-based income opportunities (Kellett and Tipple, 2000).

Second, improving the delivery of infrastructural services to poor communities is a critical LED role in support of poverty alleviation. Indeed, a major step forward towards expanding the asset base of the urban poor is to enhance their limited access to the full range of municipal services, which would generally include water supply, sanitation, refuse removal, drainage, flood protection, local roads, public transport, street lighting and traffic management. The limited access of the poor to such services is often aggravated by a tendency for design and service standards to be unaffordable or not planned for to allow incremental upgrading as poor communities improve and expand their willingness to pay for services. Third, it is critical to appreciate that for the urban poor, their greatest asset is their capacity for labour (Moser, 1996). Accordingly,

municipal actions towards employment creation represent important options for poverty alleviation. Indeed, it is stressed that employment generation as the means for alleviating urban poverty historically has been one of the major strategies for alleviating poverty in the urban developing world (Moser, 1996). A range of local government interventions in the developing world experience can facilitate job creation and assistance to poor communities. At one level this would encompass the capacity of municipal governments and actions implemented to attract new investment, retain existing investors and support the expansion of existing formal enterprises. Another dimension would be municipal interventions that favour more pro-poor economic policies that expand employment opportunities or increased incomes for poorer groups. Key areas for policy consideration relate to the activities of the survivalist informal economy, including street traders, a range of home-based enterprises, and of urban agriculture. In particular, the introduction of ‘accommodationist programmes’ towards the informal economy by municipal governments allows scope for low-income groups to develop or pursue their own livelihoods through informal enterprise. Another pro-poor tilt in municipal policies includes direct support offered for the expansion of labour-based public employment and for community-based enterprises.

### **PRO-POOR LED IN URBAN SOUTH AFRICA**

The above discussion of the pro-poor agenda for LED interventions in cities, drawn from the developing world record, can be enriched by turning to the specific South African urban experience. As mentioned earlier, in the context of the developing world South African LED interventions are often seen as innovative, not least concerning the emphasis that is accorded to the development of pro-poor LED.

In urban South Africa a variety of LED interventions have been introduced over the last two decades (Bloch, 2000; Rogerson, 2000a). The earliest LED interventions pioneered in cities such as Cape Town, Johannesburg and Durban during the late 1980s and early 1990s essentially were pro-growth and of the form that was described as market-led approaches. Major emphasis was placed upon the attraction of external investment through a range of LED interventions that centred on place marketing, property-led regeneration and the development of ‘hard’ infrastructure. This first wave of LED has been augmented later by a second wave of LED interventions across South African cities



which has focused more on issues of business retention and on support for local business enterprise, including small business (Bloch, 2000). Of significance is the fact that these initial forms of LED in South Africa were introduced and led at the *local* level.

Since 1994, however, there has been a coordinated efforts to diffuse more widely the practices of LED in South Africa through the formulation of a national framework for supporting LED. As the impetus for driving LED shifted to the level of national government, there has occurred also a notable change in the priorities for LED interventions. At the heart of developing a national framework for LED has been the activities of the national Department of Provincial and Local Government which is the lead national department with the mandate for LED policy formulation. Through the frameworks that have been evolved by DPLG there has been a marked shift progressively towards adoption of a more pro-poor focus in South African LED interventions as a whole.

An increasing number of LED policy interventions have been introduced since 1994 which have sought to address rising levels of urban poverty in South Africa. The essential form of these poverty-focussed interventions follows closely the international emphasis upon strengthening the asset base of disadvantaged or poor communities. In strengthening the asset base of poor communities through LED measures, a number of important broad intervention areas are identified (Rogerson, 1999, 2000a). Three critical policy areas in urban South Africa thus have surrounded the improvement of regulatory frameworks, the major extension of municipal services and infrastructure delivery, and issues of employment creation or more correctly livelihood support through more conciliatory approaches towards the informal sector and home-based economic activities in cities. Of more recent application is the implementation of affirmative systems of public procurement as a means to support emergent SMMEs, particularly in terms of urban infrastructure delivery programmes (Watermeyer, 2000). The essential policy direction has been towards the greater adoption and implementation in cities of elements of what were described as “community based economic development programmes” as a supplement to the existing foci on business or enterprise development.

The current South African understanding of “what is LED” is linked to the overarching concept of developmental local government (South Africa, 1998) and of the national

government's interpretation of LED as an outcome based on local initiative and driven by local stakeholders “to stimulate economic growth and development” (DPLG, 2000a, p. 1). More specifically, the process whereby local initiative combines skills, resources and ideas aims “to create employment opportunities for local residents, alleviate poverty, and redistribute resources and opportunities to the benefit of all local residents” (DPLG, 2000a, p. 1). In the draft LED policy paper issued in 2000 a series of interlocking challenges that confront localities were defined as constituting the base for LED, *inter alia*,

- to balance local economic strategies so they achieve both increased competitiveness – sometimes through economic transformation – and poverty alleviation and job creation;
- to address enormous pent-up demand for service delivery, particularly where services have not reached vulnerable members of society, as well as severe affordability constraints;
- to engage in more open, transparent and mutually respectful state-society relations; and
- to forge new and reformed inter-governmental relationships (DPLG, 2000b,p. 1).

From the above, it is clear that the official conception of LED in South Africa accommodates elements of what in the international literature were referred to as market-led and market-critical approaches towards LED. Although the existing LED planning has been dominated by LED activities geared to achieving high growth rates, the current draft for a national policy framework stresses that the South African priority for LED is to be founded on a pro-poor basis. Indeed, it is stated in the latest (draft) South African policy document<sup>1</sup> (South Africa, 2002) that LED activities should be rooted most firmly upon the *developmental* and pro-poor responsibilities that have been given to municipalities (Bond, 2001, 2002). This framework document rejects “orthodox” LED approaches, such as the attraction of external investment or property-led growth, which it views as both reflecting “corporate-dominated power relations, but in part also reflects the failure of some municipal officials to give more attention to sustainable development” (Bond, 2002, p. 6). Rather, the document projects a ‘bottom-up’ approach to LED which is viewed as both challenging ‘the Washington Consensus’

and offers instead a community-based approach associated “with a new, more sustainable paradigm”. At the core of this new sustainable paradigm is stressed the importance of local government working with low-income communities and their organisations. Overall, the approach “explicitly aims to link profitable growth and redistributive development” (Bond, 2002, p. 5). It is stated that there are at least six “developmental” LED strategies which should be supported, namely community-based economic development; linkage; human capital development; infrastructure and municipal services; leak plugging in the local economy; and retaining and expanding local economic activity.

Although this listing represents a selection of certain elements of so-termed second wave LED (eg business retention and local business development) as well as endorsing several aspects of third wave LED (such as human capital), the document is distinctive for its argument that LED should be “refocused on the poor”. Indeed, the pro-poor focus of the whole policy paper with its anchor upon infrastructure-provision in poor communities marks a significant turning away from the international policy mainstream. The report argues an economic rationale for a programme of municipal community services-based LED, geared to expanding access to infrastructure and services, alongside the benefits for “greater gender equality, improved public health, lower levels of racial segregation, and improved social capital”(Bond, 2002, p. 14). For example, it is estimated that one new small business can be created for every ten electricity connections that are made (Bond, 2002, p. 16). To achieve local economic benefits from municipal services provision and infrastructure investment requires, however, “close attention to the ongoing subsidies that will permit the systems to operate” (Bond, 2002, p. 16). It is argued that “the best administrative system for this would be a free lifeline amount provided through metered taps and metered electricity hookups, with technical systems to reduce the amount to be consumed to the lifeline minimum in the event of non-payment on amounts higher than that minimum” (Bond, 2002, p.16). Overall, this pro-poor focussed LED policy document substantially challenges conventional LED programming. Instead, it asserts a commitment to and embrace of a “Stiglitz-style ‘Post-Washington Consensus’” that focuses on sustainable local economic development.

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<sup>1</sup> As the policy document has still not been formally approved by Cabinet, no reference here is made directly to the contents of the document and no direct citation from that document is undertaken.

## IN SEARCH OF PRO-POOR LED: THE CASE OF JOHANNESBURG

The task in this section is to analyse pro-poor interventions for LED in the case of one South African city, namely Johannesburg. The goal here is not to provide a catalogue of municipal anti-poverty interventions, rather it is to suggest that within existing frameworks for LED planning in the city, more room can be made for pro-poor interventions. The most significant LED policy framework for Johannesburg is that provided by the important *Johannesburg 2030* document which was issued by the city's corporate planning unit (GJMC, 2001). This framework document seeks to offer a vision and long-term strategy for the future development of Johannesburg over the next three decades. The core goals are by 2030 to elevate Johannesburg into the ranks of 'world cities' with a strongly outward-oriented economy, specialised in the service sector, and exhibiting strong economic growth which delivers increasing standards of living and quality of life to all the city's inhabitants (GJMC, 2001).

Of central significance in the strategic planning proposed for the city is the endorsement of *targeted or selected sectoral interventions* that would be made by the city authorities in order to enhance economies of localisation (GJMC, 2001, p. 68). It is stated as follows: "While we do not claim that the Council has either the constitutional competency or the jurisdiction to consider and implement a true and meaningful industrial policy, the evidence suggests that key interventions by local government to assist in the removal of specific constraints can nurture economic growth" (GJMC, 2001, p. 68). Based upon this argument it is further proposed that "the City focus its limited resources and limited basket of interventions to a few sectors only and that it do it in an explicit manner" (GJMC, 2001, p. 70). Several broad policy tools available to Council are discerned and put forward as potential interventions to assist the select or targeted sectors. Amongst the policy levers for sectoral support are *inter alia* , to provide information and linkages to other spheres of government for key sectors; to provide co-ordination for Council services to key sectors; to provide sectoral bureaux for key sectors; to provide data, information and

market access to key sectors; to assist in the removal of specific bottlenecks faced by key sectors; and, to assist in the provision of catalytic investments in key sectors (GJMC, 2001, p. 96).

In sector selection, the methodology used was based upon an analysis of varying sector's relative attractiveness (as measured by growth in Gross Geographic Product [GGP], employment growth, contribution to GGP and employment, and multiplier effect) and relative competitiveness, which was indexed by productivity growth and export propensity. This methodology yielded a set of sectors in a preferred area of high attractiveness and high competitiveness as well as a group of other sectors that might be assisted by city government to become attractive and competitive. Significantly, the analysis identifies the high-skill and knowledge-based financial and business services sector as that sector which ranks most strongly on the basis of relative attractiveness and competitiveness. Finally, the analysis discloses a set of sectors that do not qualify for sectoral targeting support measures on the basis of their poor performance on indexes of relative attractiveness and competitiveness (GJMC, 2001, p. 71).

It is evident from the foregoing discussion that the selection of targeted sectors in *Johannesburg 2030* is based unashamedly on the criteria of maximising the contribution of individual sectors for the goals of enhancing city competitiveness and urban economic growth. *What is argued here is that a similar methodology could be applied in order to identify the most attractive sectors for the achievement of poverty alleviation.* The selection methodology for a targeted pro-poor LED might focus instead on the relative attractiveness of sectors in terms of measures of labour intensity or skill levels and the degree to which sectors provide (or might be leveraged so as to offer) substantial livelihood opportunities for the most vulnerable or core groups of the urban poor, such as women, the youth or the elderly. A comprehensive analysis of the different sectors of Johannesburg's economy in order to yield a targeted group of sectors for pro-poor LED intervention is beyond the scope of this present analysis for it would require a deepening of the city's existing informational and data sources. Nevertheless, the principle must be acknowledged that important gains can be made in terms of the objectives for pro-poor LED by targeted interventions supporting selected sectors that maximise impacts upon reducing urban

poverty. The selection of sectors can be undertaken using a refinement of the methodology, as applied in the *Johannesburg 2030*, to identify those sectors with the highest potential of contributing to the goals of achieving world city status, enhanced growth and competitiveness.

In order to take this argument a step further, it is proposed to discuss three illustrative sectors in Johannesburg which might be *suggested* as potential sectoral candidates for targeted support as part of pro-poor LED. The suggested three sectors to illustrate the argument are those of (1) urban agriculture, (2) the clothing industry, and (3) tourism. The objective in each case is to demonstrate how these sectors might be potential areas for leveraging intervention strategies that seek to maximise the objectives of alleviating poverty in Johannesburg.

### 1. *The Case of Urban Agriculture*

Over the last two decades considerable international attention has centred on the potential of urban agriculture for sustainable development planning in the South (Van der Berg, 2000), and upon its local potential as a pro-poor urban development intervention. The significance of urban agriculture in relation to growing problems of poverty in cities attracted the attention of many leading international development agencies, more especially through the findings of the first detailed research investigations appearing on urban agriculture (Mougeot, 1994a, 1994b, 1998; van den Berg, 2000). During the 1990s a stream of research studies in developing world cities pointed to the potentially critical role that might be played by urban agriculture in alleviating the pressures of urban poverty (Smit and Nasr, 1992; Egziabher *et al.*, 1994). Most importantly, in 1996 the United Nations Development Programme published a comprehensive report for consideration at the Habitat II meeting (Istanbul, June 1996) which emphasizes the activity's significance for sustainable urbanization, job creation, for feeding cities and for poverty alleviation (UNDP, 1996).

In terms of its developmental contributions, urban agriculture is viewed as having several positive attributes. Urban agriculture is seen as enhancing food security, provides income and employment for both poor and middle-income dwellers and contributes to an ecologically sound urban environment (de Zeeuw *et al.*, 2002, p. 163).

The impact of urban agriculture on food security in terms of overall availability and supply of food for urban markets is well-documented (Maxwell, 2002). It has been argued that urban agriculture contributes to “increased food availability, stability and, to some extent, accessibility” (Egal *et al*, 2001, p. 149). For urban households even if the proportion of total household access to food from household production is small, its importance is heightened at critical times such as when income is insufficient for food purchases or allows households to access foods that add to dietary diversity. As de Zeeuw (2002) and others have pointed out, in the South urban agriculture functions as a significant strategy for poverty alleviation and social integration of the urban poor, especially during periods of structural adjustment. Nugent (2002, pp. 86-87) asserts that urban agriculture provides “a particularly good buffer against sectoral shocks” or temporary emergencies from civil, weather or macroeconomic upheaval. Nevertheless, as situations of ‘economic crisis’ become almost a permanent situation for households in many parts of the developing world, “farming may constitute an important means to survive by providing a substantial part of a family food and possibly some income” (de Zeeuw, 2002, p. 1).

Overall, for the UNDP (1996, p. 4) urban agriculture is considered “ an easy-in, easy-out entrepreneurial activity for people at different levels of income”. More specifically, it is stated that: “For the poorest of the poor, it provides good access to food. For the stable poor, it provides a source of income and good quality food at low cost. For middle-income families, it offers the possibility of savings and a return on their investment in urban property. For small and large entrepreneurs, it is a profitable business” (UNDP, 1996, p. 4). For disadvantaged groups, such as women-headed households, young people without a job, recent immigrants, the elderly or disabled and so on, another advantage of urban agriculture is to integrate them more strongly into the urban network and provide them with a decent chance of a livelihood (de Zeeuw, 2002). The building of ‘community’ is thus an added positive outcome of urban agricultural developments. Moreover, the nutritional benefits of urban agriculture for such vulnerable groups may be considerable. Urban agriculture can make available at low cost fresh vegetables and other perishable crops, lowering their cost and increasing their availability, and improving the micro-content of diets. For the growing numbers of urban poor and informally employed in cities of the South, urban agriculture is a vital means of earning an income or meeting basic needs (Nugent, 2002). The UNDP’s (1996, p. 170) international survey disclosed that “urban farming provides secure jobs to many in the city” and in some cities of the South “as many as one-fifth to one-third of all families are engaged in agriculture with as many as a third of these having no other source of income”. More recently, Mougeot ‘s (2002, p. 26) international cross-

sectional investigation concurs that from several cities in the South “UA makes an important contribution to employment and income generation”. From household level studies of its impact, it is evident that urban agriculture “can make a difference to those who use it as one among an array of strategies” (Nugent, 2002, p. 87). The benefits of urban farming to farmers and their families are interpreted as “a springboard for its benefits to society” in terms of “improving the health and productivity of poorer populations and providing them an opportunity to earn additional income” (UNDP, 1996, p. 165).

The case for targeting urban agriculture as one means to combat rising levels of urban poverty in Johannesburg is compelling. Several contributions link the policy significance of urban cultivation in South Africa to planning for the sustainability of the country's cities, focussing on its role in poverty alleviation (Rogerson, 1993; May and Rogerson, 1995; Rogerson, 1998; Thorgren, 1998; Austin and Visser, 2002). In addition, the critical contribution made by urban agriculture to food security has been shown for groups of low-income women cultivators (Rogerson, 1996). The promotion of urban agriculture is variously seen as contributing towards food security, the generation of productive income opportunities and as a strategy that is particularly geared to assisting the poorest of the urban poor (Thorgren, 1998; Slater, 2001; Austin and Visser, 2002). Much of this South African research draws upon detailed interviews conducted with informal cultivators operating in or around metropolitan Johannesburg or of the activities of planned urban agriculture projects operating in areas such as Soweto and Ivory Park.

In the context of international research on urban agriculture, a distinctive feature of the South African experience is the growing linkage between planning for urban agriculture and planning for LED which focuses particularly upon issues of unemployment and poverty alleviation (Rogerson, 2000a; Austin and Visser, 2002). The area of Midrand is of greatest interest in terms of LED and urban agriculture because of Midrand's proclaimed status as South Africa's eco-city (Rogerson, 2002a). As a result of high levels of urban poverty, urban agriculture is of growing importance in Midrand's low-income settlements such as Ivory Park and signs of urban agriculture are in evidence throughout the settlement. Rain-fed maize and vegetables are the prime crops that are cultivated. Open spaces under electricity power lines and land next to the Kaalspruit river are the major zones for cultivation alongside widespread backyard cultivation. In addition, there occurs extensive cultivation activity at all the schools and health clinics



within the Ivory Park area. At the schools, unemployed parents till the school gardens producing vegetables for primary and secondary school children, many of whom exhibited severe features of starvation after the withdrawal of the nutritional programmes (Primary School Nutritional Programme) introduced in the immediate years of post-apartheid reconstruction. These initiatives for school feeding were supported by the Social Development department which offered advice, provision of seeds and manure for start-up projects. In addition, at health clinics community gardens are tendered by groups of approximately 35 patients, the majority of whom are either HIV-infected or tuberculosis patients. Overall, the core thrust of the Social Development department has been to support urban agricultural initiatives as part of job security and as food security.

There is another strand of urban agriculture projects in Midrand (Rogerson, 2002a). As part of the wider initiatives for Midrand to be an eco-city, there are a set of programmes designed to support groups of cultivators using organic methods of production. The focus of the ecocity projects is upon addressing urban agriculture as part of the overarching objective of making “a city which is both interdependent and self-reliant through creating its own economic, social and environmental solutions”. The goals of urban agriculture in the eco-city are more ambitious than those of projects linked to the Midrand Social Development department. Urban agriculture is viewed now “as an important component of urban renewal”, able to “improve local food security and address the extremes of poverty”. Nevertheless, it is argued that there is a “potential for urban agriculture to extend beyond food security or subsistence level production into commercial agriculture”. The object is to afford the basis for viable agricultural micro-enterprise and subsequently for a set of agro-industries. The institutional basis for the eco-city organic agriculture projects is support for a set of community-run co-operatives rather than for individual farmers, albeit in a future phase the goal is to support agricultural SMMEs. At the core of the project is the organic market which opened in late 2000; currently, there are a total of 80 farmers involved in the organic agriculture projects under the aegis of six cooperatives. For individuals in these projects the target is for a net income return target of R16 000 which would be a level above the defined poverty line. Several problems need to be overcome include access to land and water as well as ensuring against crop theft.

Above all, what is most striking in Midrand is the absence of any coordinated set of policy interventions to support the different kinds of initiatives which are taking place for urban agriculture. This analysis reinforces again the case for urban agriculture to be a selected targeted sector for LED interventions that can have a maximum impact upon

redressing poverty in Greater Johannesburg, particularly in respect of some of the most vulnerable groups of the city's poor.

## *2. The Case of the Clothing Industry*

The clothing industry in Johannesburg was by-passed in terms of the sectoral targeting exercise undertaken in *Johannesburg 2030* which was rooted upon indices of relative attractiveness and competitiveness (GJMC, 2001). It concluded, none the less, that whilst the clothing industry in Johannesburg was low on competitiveness it did have some redeeming features in terms of attractiveness in terms of its capacity for labour absorption. Overall the framework document for the city expresses "great concern" about the position of manufacturing as a whole, particular in terms of indices of competitiveness (GJMC, 2001, p. 72). It asserted that currently "the only manufacturing sub sectors capable of driving the City's vision in terms of GGP growth and employment are the chemical, printing and publishing, furniture and professional equipment sectors". From a pro-poor LED perspective, however, this neglect of manufacturing is worrying and not least the exclusion of the clothing industry from the list of targeted sectors.

In terms of national production, the Johannesburg metropolitan area is the third most important geographical focus for formal clothing manufacturing following the Western Cape and Durban (Rogerson, 2001). Recently the clothing industry in the city has been experiencing a phase of radical restructuring with total employment and output indicators relatively stagnant over the last decade and a zero percent growth rate recorded between 1990 and 1999 (GJMC, 2001). This unpromising performance of the local clothing economy is little different, however, from the weak performance recorded of the national clothing industry which has been struggling to adjust to the challenges of trade liberalisation and globalisation (Rogerson, 2002b). Historically, high wage levels in Johannesburg area have been the root cause of the demise of the local garments industry from as far back as the early 1960s. During the 1970s the decline of the formal local clothing economy was accelerated by the introduction in 1968 of the Environment Planning Act which restricted the number of black workers that could be employed by the majority of factories located in the Witwatersrand. This apartheid-inspired legislation was particularly targeted at discouraging the growth in large urban areas of labour-intensive production activities, such as clothing. With the parallel offer of generous location incentives in decentralized areas, many clothing producers based in Johannesburg chose either to relocate their factories lock-stock-and-barrel to decentralized areas or sought to establish branch plants in which there would occur the most labour-intensive and least-skilled processes of clothing production. Other

Johannesburg producers elected to relocate their factories either to the Western Cape or Durban metropolitan areas (Rogerson, 2001).

Recent detailed research on the dynamics of industrial change in the Witwatersrand between 1980-1999 furnishes evidence that the formal clothing economy has been in a continued state of stagnation and decline both in terms of the numbers of establishments and total employment (Rogerson and Rogerson, 1995, 1997, 1999; Rogerson, 2000b). Around the industrial townships of inner-city Johannesburg the demise of the formal clothing industry has been marked. In 1980 there was an estimated 232 factory establishments with nearly 15 000 employees; a decade later the factory establishments were down to 170 in total with 13 500 workers; by 1999 it was evident that the numbers of factories was further reduced to 111 offering only 9000 employment opportunities within Johannesburg inner city (Rogerson and Rogerson, 1995; Rogerson, 2000b). Key reasons for this loss of formal employment and closure of formal clothing factories are those of (1) low productivity, (2) a concentration of Johannesburg producers on the lower-income end of the clothing market which is particularly sensitive to competition from imports, and (3) a reluctance of clothing enterprises to undertake dynamic adjustment strategies that might contribute towards enhanced competitiveness (Kesper, 1999).

Despite its considerable decline, as measured both by factory establishments or numbers of employees, by 1999 the clothing sector was the largest industrial sector in Johannesburg inner-city, an area of metropolitan Johannesburg with considerable numbers of poor residents (Rogerson, 2001). In terms of the area's formal industrial economy, clothing represented approximately 20 percent of factory establishments and nearly one-third of manufacturing employees. The rump of formal clothing production in inner-city Johannesburg occurs in factories which are owned by either white or Asian entrepreneurs. Alongside this group of formal clothing producers, however, there has occurred a recent surge of informal clothing manufacturers situated in the inner-city (Rogerson and Rogerson, 1996, 1997b; Rogerson, 2001). This new informal clothing economy is highly fluid and largely dominated by black South African entrepreneurs, albeit with an increasing segment of production activities run by immigrant entrepreneurs mainly from Francophone West Africa, Malawi and Botswana (Rogerson, 1997; Peberdy and Rogerson, 2000). The broad picture is thus one of a continuing trend towards the decline in employment opportunities among formal clothing producers in Johannesburg which has been precipitating by the restructuring challenges posed by trade liberalisation and globalisation (Rogerson, 2002b).

Accompanying this decline, however, is a situation of promising new growth, particularly of small-scale producers, many of whom are unregistered enterprises and would be classed as informal sector. It is apparent that the clothing industry is one of the major growth points in the emerging SMME economy of inner-city Johannesburg. Within the category of emerging clothing production enterprise are two distinct and very different kinds of entrepreneur. First, are a distinctive group of clothing producers, who are immigrant entrepreneurs, establishing their businesses within inner-city Johannesburg on the basis either of capital brought in from outside South Africa or from savings earned whilst working in South Africa (Peberdy and Rogerson, 2000). Much of this group of entrepreneurs are providing job opportunities for South Africans as well as other immigrants in the inner-city. The second and largest group are represented by clothing enterprises which are run by black South Africans, many of whom started their operations in the home either in a township area or in the inner-city flatlands of Johannesburg (Rogerson, 2001). Facing cramped conditions in home premises, many of the more successful of these micro-entrepreneurs shifted their businesses into the inner-city (Rogerson and Rogerson, 1997a). Significantly, the majority of these new inner-city clothing entrepreneurs are female, many are primary household income providers and most generate incomes of no more than R1500 per month (BEES Trust, 2002).

From a poverty perspective it can be argued that a strong case can be made for selective targeting of the clothing industry for LED interventions in terms upon its impact upon the poor in general and especially upon groups of women-headed households. A number of recent research investigations have highlighted the plight and difficulties of these emerging clothing entrepreneurs of inner-city Johannesburg (Rogerson, 2001; BEES Trust, 2002; Jocum and Cachalia, 2002). The key findings of these studies highlight the existing poverty level incomes of the majority of entrepreneurs and their workers, low skill levels, limited or non-existent business development and social welfare services, and limited networking and social capital development in the sector. LED interventions supported by the City Council of Johannesburg can assist to alleviate poverty for the garment industry micro-enterprise operators through a group of initiatives to support the clothing cluster via social capital enhancement and micro-enterprise development, training as well as support for social welfare services. Through the Johannesburg Development Agency, which is responsible particularly for inner-city regeneration, the Johannesburg Council recently has become involved in pilot programmes designed to offer support to the inner-city garments cluster (BEES Trust, 2002). Nevertheless, much more could be achieved

with selective targeting of the clothing industry and greater resource allocation on grounds of its high impact on the urban poor.

### *3. The Case of Tourism*

Over the past five years there has occurred a fundamental shift in the central discourses that surround tourism and development. This changed emphasis in tourism debates was precipitated by mounting concern about the triumph and dominance of the green agenda in the treatment of tourism since the 1992 Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro (Goodwin, 1998, 2001). In the first years after the Rio Summit, the triple bottom line of economic, social and environmental concerns was heavily biased towards environmental considerations. What was absent or downplayed in these debates around environmental sustainability was concerted attention to the impacts of tourism upon the poor. Under the support of DFID and the British Overseas Development Institute, a major burst in writings recently has occurred concerning ‘pro-poor tourism’ which seeks to challenge those tourism developments driven by economic or environmental considerations.

The agenda of pro-poor tourism focuses on how tourism affects the livelihoods of the poor and of how positive impacts can be enhanced through sets of interventions or strategies designed to nurture pro-poor tourism (DFID, 1999; Ashley, Boyd and Goodwin, 2000; Ashley, Goodwin and Roe, 2001; Ashley, Roe and Goodwin, 2001; Roe and Urquhart, 2001). As stated by its proponents, pro-poor tourism is “tourism that generates net benefits to the poor” and seeks to “ensure that tourism growth contributes to poverty reduction” (Ashley, Roe and Goodwin, 2001, p. 2). Pro-poor tourism is not a specific product or sector of tourism but rather an overall approach that aims to “unlock opportunities – for economic gain, other livelihood benefits or engagement in decision-making – by the poor” (Ashley, Goodwin and Roe, 2001, p. 1). During the past five years, this stream of important writings concerning pro-poor tourism has radically reshaped debates and discourse around tourism and development, in particular by asking the key question of how can tourism become more pro-poor? (DFID, 1999).

Until recently, few governments – national or local - considered linking tourism development directly to efforts for poverty reduction. As a highly sophisticated sector, strongly influenced by marketing skills, information technology and dominated by a

small group of enterprises based in the North, tourism is sometimes seen “as an inappropriate sector to start in shaping pro-poor growth” (Cattarinich, 2001, p. 8). Nevertheless, considering the size of the tourism industry and how it already affects millions of poor people, it is evident that “a marginal improvement could generate substantial benefits”(DFID, 1999, p. 2). Overall, the pro-poor tourism school of writers maintains, whilst tourism in itself is insufficient as a poverty reduction strategy, it could potentially be a significant component of a broader pro-poor economic growth strategy. This argument may be applied not least in the cases of South Africa (Ashley and Roe, 2002) and to the specific example of Johannesburg.

Johannesburg represents a ‘non-traditional’ tourism destination (Rogerson, 2002c). Nevertheless, it has been argued that the city’s tourism industry and economy currently “is substantially large in absolute and relative terms, and exhibits sufficient growth potential that it is an important sector for the overall economy of the city” (GJMC, 2002). Within the *Johannesburg 2030* document, tourism was isolated as a sector that scored well in terms of competitiveness due to its high export propensity. None the less, low growth in the tourism market meant that the sector scored less well on indices of relative attractiveness. Overall, however, tourism was viewed as a sector that can “become a more important player in the City’s economy” (GJMC, 2001, p. 72) and thus was selected for targeting. The city’s tourism development strategy asserts that Johannesburg does not possess a competitive advantage for leisure tourism. Instead two major potential growth areas are isolated as drivers for Johannesburg’s tourism economy. The first driver is in the general area of business tourism with a special focus on the so-termed MICE sector or meetings, incentives, conferences and exhibitions. It was argued that a core objective of the city’s tourism development strategy was to make Johannesburg the premier MICE destination in South Africa (GJMC, 2002). The second driver for Johannesburg tourism was defined as building upon the city’s existing advantage as the “preferred destination of African tourists in South Africa” (GJMC, 2001, p. 88). The importance of ‘regional tourism’ is to be further exploited by a set of strategic initiatives designed to carve a niche for Johannesburg as a shopping Mecca for African retail tourism (GJMC, 2001, 2002)

Although tourism was selected as a targeted sector for LED support on the criteria of growth considerations, a case can be made equally for its selection on grounds of potential contribution to reducing poverty in the city. First, the tourism industry is by its nature relatively labour-intensive but not necessarily high-skill intensive. Tourism requires certain highly-skilled workers and a large proportion of relatively unskilled or semi-skilled employees, particularly in the accommodation sector. Accordingly, as pointed out by World Bank analysts the nature of the skills requirements in tourism means that locally the “rapid development of the tourism industry will not be constrained in the short-term by the economy-wide skills shortages because most related skills can be upgraded fairly rapidly through training” (Lewis, 2001, p. 86). Second, the principles and approach of pro-poor tourism can be applied to the MICE tourism sector of Johannesburg in so far as it can open opportunities for involvement of emerging SMME entrepreneurs. Outsourcing, subcontracting and affirmative procurement offer avenues for upgrading of emerging black owned small enterprises in the tourism industry as well as the wider tourism economy.

Third, the promotion of Johannesburg as a focal point for regional tourism from other parts of Africa holds major potential spin-offs for poverty alleviation. Current strategic proposals centre upon establishing a retail hub designed to attract African cross-border shoppers with the area bordering Alexandra township being investigated as the location for such a project development (GJMC, 2001). The establishment of such a retail tourism hub would open up a host of small enterprise opportunities around cross-border retailing both in the incipient tourism industry of Alexandra and more importantly in the wider tourism economy. Finally, outside of the two specific kinds of tourism that are targeted in the city’s tourism strategy there are emerging other opportunities for tourism to be linked to objectives of poverty alleviation. In particular, within the incipient development of heritage and cultural tourism in township areas, such as Soweto and Alexandra there are potential opportunities for redressing poverty through local entrepreneurial opportunities in the accommodation sector, entertainment as well as retailing.

## SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

This paper represents an initial exercise at conceptualising an alternative approach towards developing a pro-poor LED strategy in urban South Africa to that which has been set forth in the existing (draft) national LED policy framework. The analysis here takes as its starting point the validity of selective sectoral targeting which was a foundation for Johannesburg's thirty year economic development plan which was issued in 2001. It is argued that the methodology as applied to define target sectors based on indicators of relative attractiveness in terms of growth and of competitiveness could be modified suitably such that it could be applied to identify a set of priority or target sectors in terms of indicators of poverty alleviation. The examples of urban agriculture, the inner-city clothing economy and urban tourism were used to highlight potential sectors in which selective LED support interventions might attain a maximal impact for poverty reduction, particularly for some of the most vulnerable groups in Johannesburg. Overall, therefore, the key argument proposed in this analysis is that sectoral targeting can be deployed usefully to support the crystallisation of pro-poor urban LED interventions.

At a wider level of analysis, this paper suggests also that the imperative to address issues of poverty alleviation in LED planning in the South is placing - at the very least - a question mark on the validity of the claimed 'convergence' in LED policy prescriptions that has been suggested by some observers (cf Glasmeier, 2000). Urban poverty alleviation thus emerges as the most distinguishing feature of a growing number of LED initiatives in the developing world, not least led by some innovative programmes introduced since 1994 in South Africa.

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