



Mitigation Action Plans & Scenarios

RESEARCH PAPER

## The (Missing) Link:

Climate Change Mitigation and Poverty

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Developing  
countries exploring  
pathways to climate  
compatibility

# The (Missing) Link: Climate Change Mitigation and Poverty

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## INTRODUCTION

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The purpose of this paper, that focuses on the gaps between poverty reduction and climate mitigation, is fourfold: The first task is to remind us why, even under conditions of extreme poverty, climate mitigation cannot be ignored or overlooked. Second, it is useful to rehearse the reasons why to date climate adaptation has tended to dominate climate mitigation in the articulation of anti-poverty strategies. Third, it is possible to explain the tardiness in taking up climate mitigation within the poverty agenda by demonstrating that the fundamental methodological and conceptual apparatus, that has dominated poverty thinking over the period of climate change mobilisation, has not translated readily into mitigation action. It is implied in this analysis that for mitigation to become a more central feature of anti-poverty thinking there will need to be some theoretical adjustment in how poverty is understood; not simply the realignment of climate science to give mitigation greater profile. Moreover, cities will need to become a more prominent object of climate scientists', poverty specialists' and policy makers' attention. Taken together the arguments of the first three parts of the paper suggest that the failure to adequately link climate mitigation and poverty to date, while understandable intellectually and politically, has undermined the impact and effectiveness of both strategies. The concluding section thus points to those forums where poverty and climate mitigation scholars might be usefully target to ensure a more effective developmental agenda given the imperatives of global environmental change, especially for cities.<sup>1</sup>

## WHY CLIMATE MITIGATION CANNOT BE MARGINALISED FROM A POVERTY AGENDA

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The social and economic costs of climate impacts are most often borne by low-income groups (Tyler & Moench 2012; Moser & Satterthwaite 2008). There is thus a widespread hope that the imperative to shift the current developmental path and make human settlements more sustainable, for example through the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) process, will draw impetus from the fight for climate change action, with mitigation as a central message of how to inspire the better management of the built and natural environment (Hodson & Marvin 2010; Revi 2009). Conversely, it is clear that climate action, especially that associated with mitigation, will never gain traction in the Global South unless the transformations proposed unambiguously advance a social and not just environmental agenda and so being able to articulate why climate action could have developmental advantages is key (Parnell et al. 2008; Simon & Lech 2013).

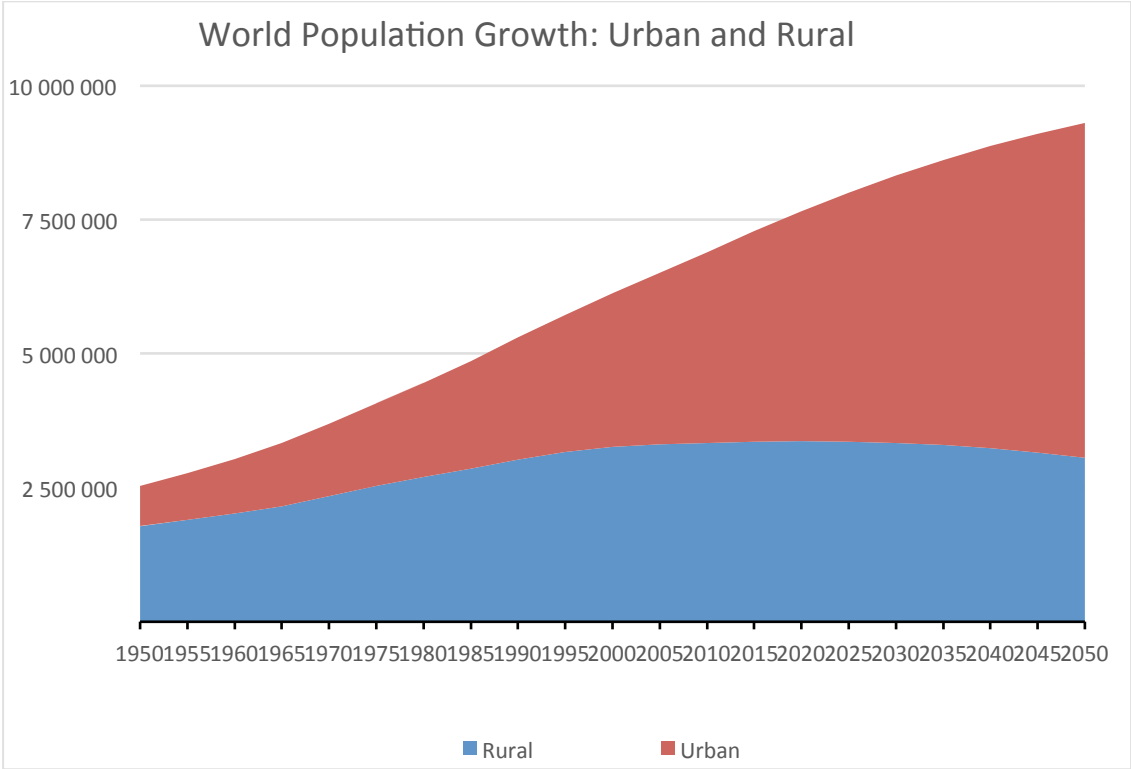
The potential that would come from making mitigation a more explicit part of an anti poverty struggle could, if realised, be very powerful politically (Bulkeley & Betsill 2013). However, the mobilising potential of linking climate mitigation and poverty in a translational research agenda is not the only reason that understanding the relationship, or interface, between the two is important. Other imperatives for a closer integration of the languages and practices of poverty relief and climate mitigation have to do with the global shift in world population, the urbanisation of poverty and the false dichotomy between adaptation and mitigation in the experience of poor people of climate related city government.

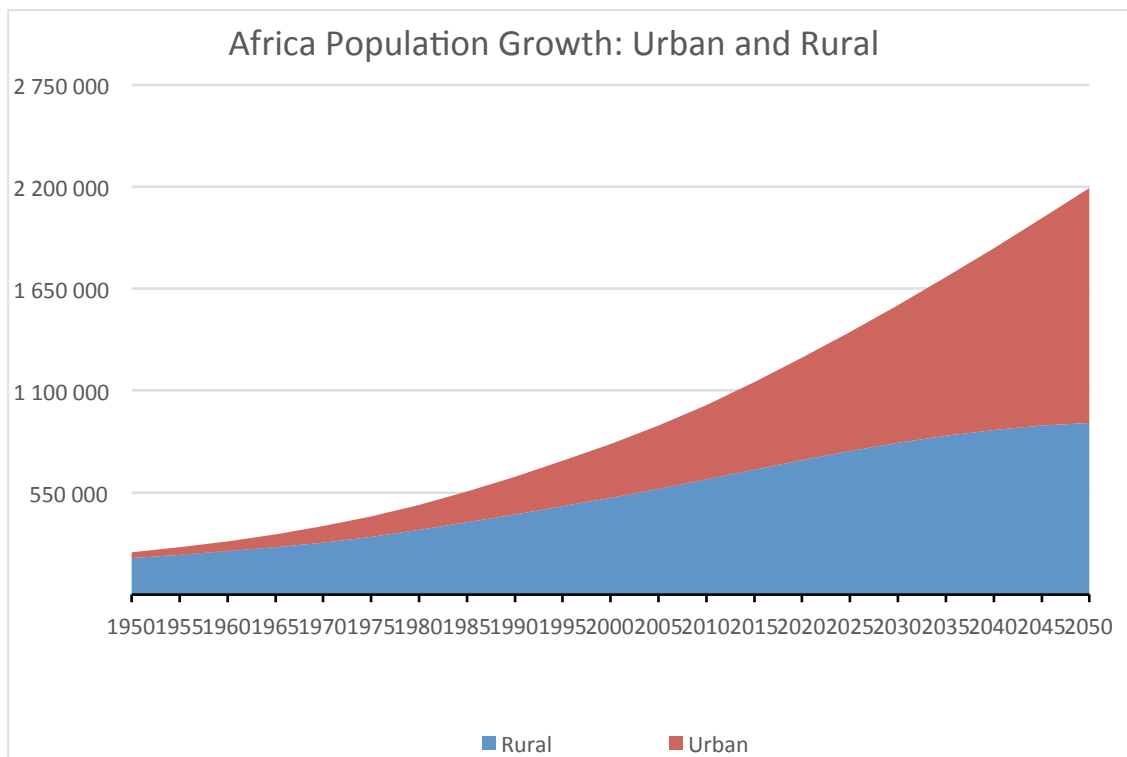
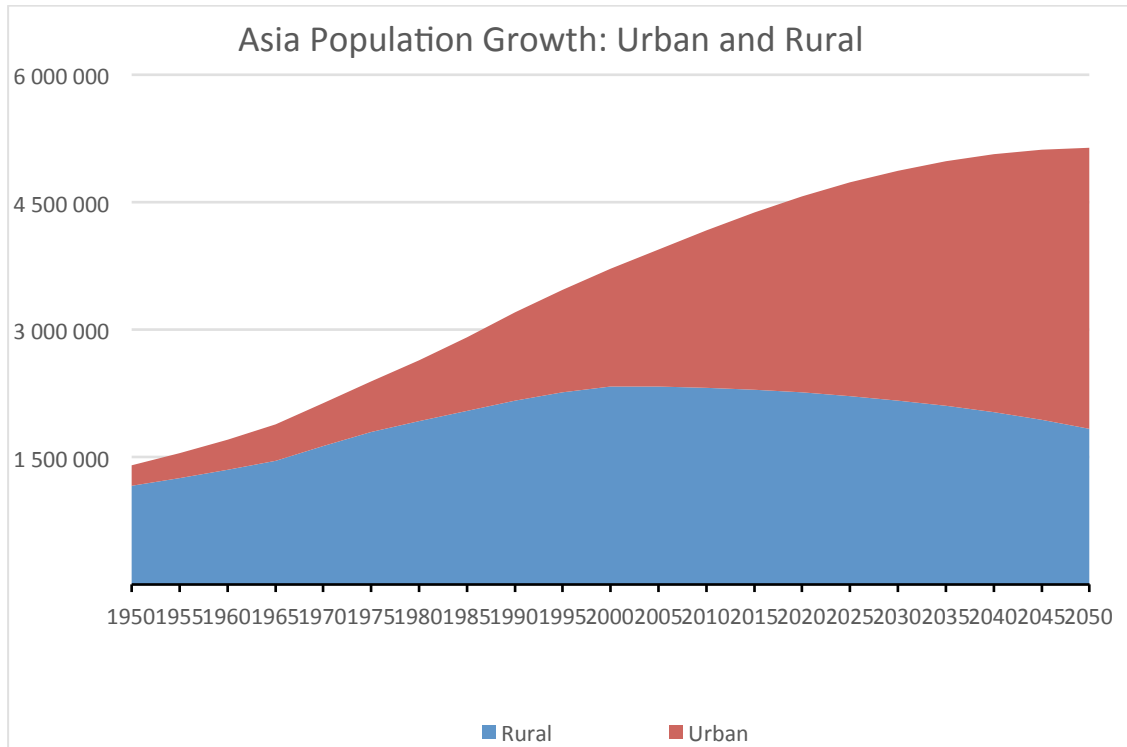
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<sup>1</sup> The focus throughout is on the sub-national or urban scale and the emphasis on the cities of the Global South.

# Population, poverty and mitigation

Demography matters in the debate about the relative emphasis on mitigation and adaptation because of the role of population size and the global distribution of poverty. Expanding populations obviously put more people at risk from climate related events, but even more important are shifts in where people live, how people live and how the settlement systems in which they reside are designed, built and managed (Martine et al. 2008). Retrofitting past structures and better planning and design of current and future human settlement can have huge implications for overall levels of global emissions (IPCC 2012; Blanco et al. 2009). Of central importance for the mitigation agenda is the macro picture of population change – specifically the growing population concentration in the Global South, especially in Asia and Africa and the shift in population into cities (Figure 1). The net increase in land use cover is the standard way that the urban population issue is expressed for mitigation studies (Seto et al. 2012), but the overall trend to the physical expansion of urban areas masks the importance of the city specific dynamics of social and spatial differentiation, where intra-city inequality is a crucial element driving mitigation that, once aggregated, also has global impact.





**Figure 1. Urban population growth through 2050 showing the dominance of the projected contributions of Asia and Africa relative to that of the world (Source: UN 2012)**

The absolute expansion in the number of people contributing to green house gas emissions is a small, if important, part of the global environmental change story (IPCC 2012). Historically poor people have been dismissed as having any significant role in the feed-backs between human settlement and global warming, because they consume little and have much lower carbon footprints than the international elite and industry (Satterthwaite et al. 2009). This is not completely true and just

because the impact of the poor on overall emissions is less problematic than those of the rich does not mean their lives, lifestyles and built environments should be discounted in mitigation scenarios; not least because the (expanding) scale of the poor population makes them, and their potentially wealthier offspring, an important driver of change. Mitigation action that is universal, not just focussed on the current elite, is an obvious precaution in securing lower rates of emission increases.

### Urbanisation of poverty

In the twenty-first century poverty is no longer a predominantly rural phenomena (Martine et al. 2008; Satterthwaite & Mitlin 2013; Turok & Mc Granahan 2013). Even noting that income figures horribly underestimate urban poverty, the rates of increase in cash based poverty are higher in urban areas than they are in rural areas (Figure 2). Urbanisation and natural urban growth, especially the high growth rates of poor cities, means that increasingly large numbers of the poor partake in emission generating activities such as eating food sourced far away from their homes and undertaking long motorised journeys to work. Moreover, predictions of the doubling of the urban population over the next 30 years (United Nations 2012) imply that cities in the Global South, which are now only half-built, will become a more significant driver of global change in years to come. How these cities are designed and what is used in their construction is key to future emission scenarios. Even under current conditions much more could be done by way of mitigation in the cities of the south. While it is true that the poorest of the poor live in structures sourced from recycled materials and natural resources, these low carbon buildings are not the norm for the urban poor who are typically renters in low quality, low efficiency buildings put up by developers or built as low cost state housing. Energy efficiency is not necessarily the hallmark of the neighbourhoods of the urban poor even when major programmes of retrofitting occur (Lewis & Jooste 2012; Silver 2014); unsustainable settlement development is (Swilling & Annecke 2012). Without more effective urban planning regimes introducing comprehensive climate mitigation action is a pipe dream.

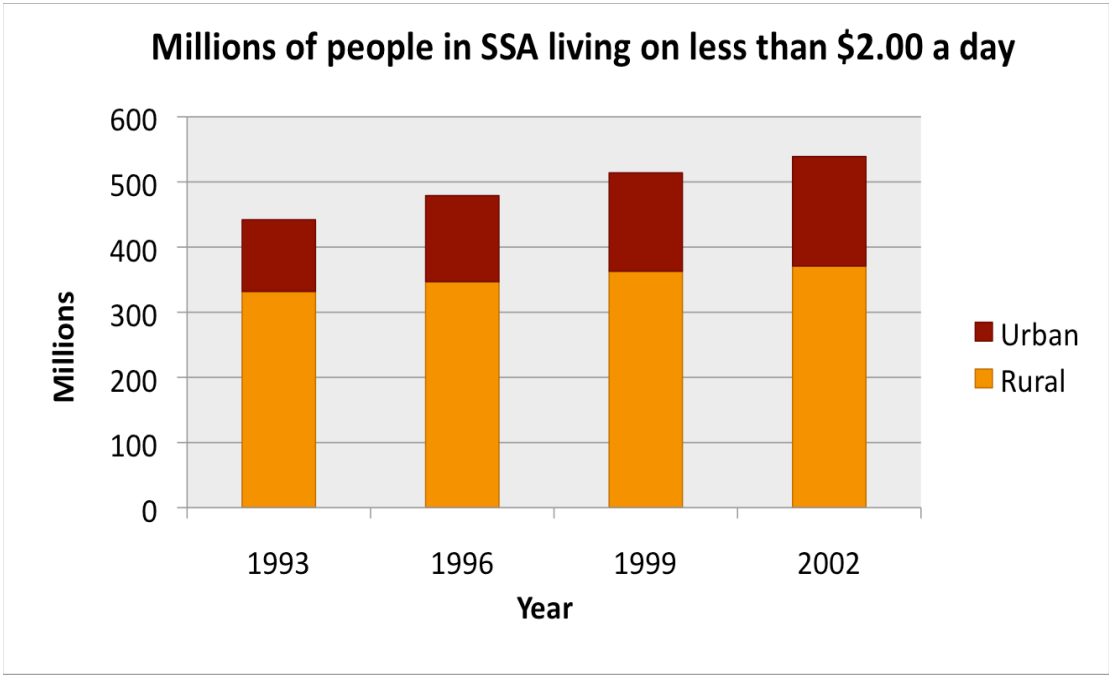


Figure 2: Rates of urban and rural poverty increases (UN-Habitat 2003)

Climate innovative cities of the Global North, like London or New York, have demonstrated that how cities are managed can enhance or detract from meeting climate mitigation targets (Rosenzweig et al. 2011). However, it is widely acknowledged

that effecting low carbon transitions requires effective and innovative governance, including at the city scale (Hunt & Watkiss 2011), something few nations or cities in the Global South can deliver – at least right now (Anguelovski & Carmin 2011; Carmin et al. 2012; Cartwright et al. 2012). If it were true that the majority of residents of cities in poor countries were poor low-level energy consumers this would matter less for climate mitigation than it does. The rise of a new urban middle class in the emerging economies (Figure 3) is much lauded by economists. There is some debate over exactly how rich or poor these, generally urban, residents actually are (ADB 2011; Pieterse 2013; Turok 2013), but what is clear is that there is not only the urbanisation of poverty, with its associated expansion in energy albeit off small levels, but also the concentration of a new middle class in nations and cities that remain poor overall.

These demographic and spatial transitions imply a dramatic expansion of the absolute and relative proportion of the world’s population living in places where mitigation is not a central concern and where cities are not well enough managed to introduce mitigation measures that rest on effective state or organised private sector and civil society capacity. It also highlights that there has been little attention given to what happens when, as is widely desired and expressly targeted in the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), millions of people are lifted out of poverty. Therefore, we have to ask what the appropriate climate mitigation response will need to be given the legitimate increase in resource use by those escaping poverty. This is not to imply that there needs to be a transition from adaption to mitigation as GDP increases, poverty falls or urbanisation rises. Rather, poverty and mitigation will need to co-exist as part of national and sub-national climate resilient responses forged in response to poverty and inequality. The distribution of poverty, especially urban poverty, is such that although poor countries and cities in poor countries experience the deepest rates of poverty, the actual numbers of the poor are greater in middle income nations where the urban middle classes of the BRICS and other nations are flourishing (Mc Granahan & Martine 2014).

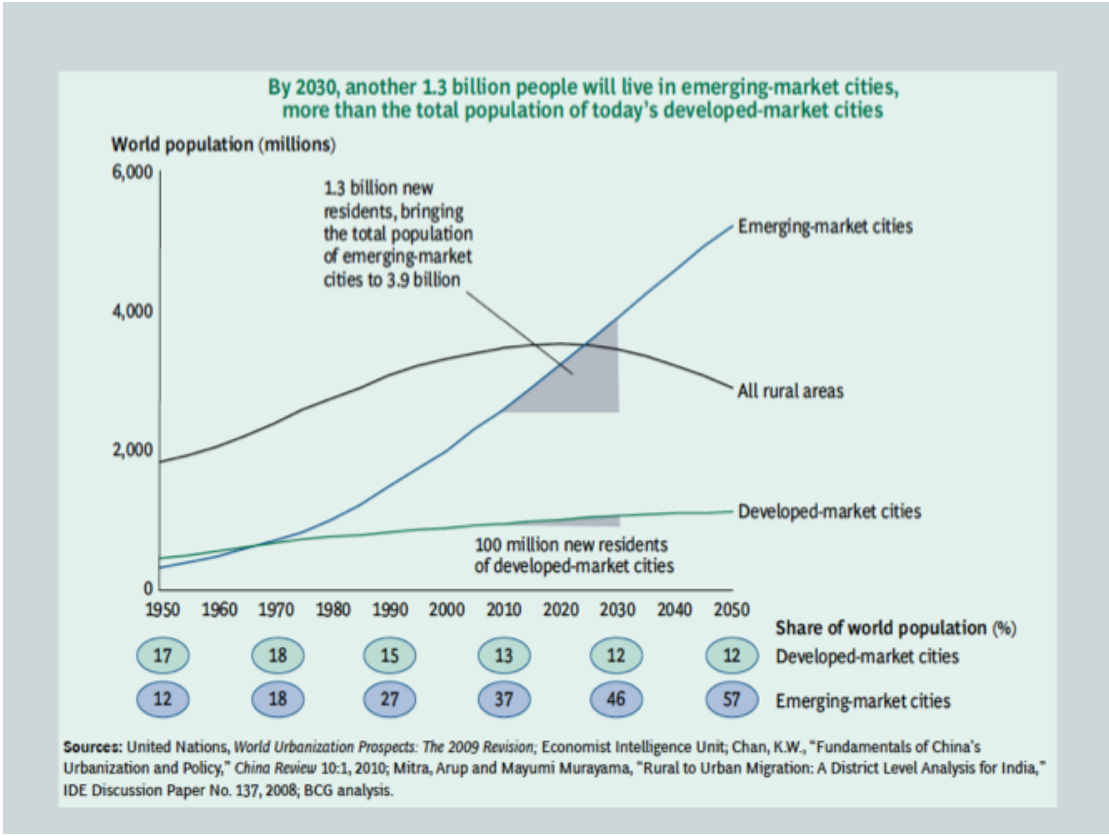


Figure 3: Population trends reflecting the rise in the urban middle class of the Global South.



## Mitigation and adaption are not divisible in shaping vulnerability

The theoretical co-existence and interdependence of urban climate mitigation and adaptation action is now widely acknowledged, finding that integration is increasingly realised in institutionally thick contexts of cooperative governance and strong strategic planning (Rosenzweig et al. 2011). However, where planning is weak and governance is fractured (either internally between scales, sectorally between departments, or between the state and other powerful players such as chiefs, informal or illegal service providers), operational and institutional tension over what policy direction the city as a whole follows remains and climate action is held up by the conflicting rationalities of different development imperatives (Parnell et al. 2007). In cities with large poor populations these latter conditions are the norm (Bicknell et al. 2009). Marvin & Hodson (2013) warn that even in well resourced cities the fragmentation of urban governance means that mitigation based ideas like green growth are being used to marginalise issues of justice and promote the interests of the elite. It is a pattern that is undoubtedly even more true in fast growing middle income cities where the private sector drives the bulk of urban expansion, often in edge cities under the rubric of green growth that utterly excludes the poorest (Watson 2013). What is clear is that planning failure is as much a part of mitigation failure as it is of adaptation failure. For example, the Asian Development Bank (2010) points out that there is evidence of a systemic failure in the delivery of formal services to many urban poor communities. To some extent this can be attributed to the limited resources of local authorities, but there is also official aversion to being seen to 'legitimise' settlers' claims by providing utility connections to what are considered temporary dwellings. Under these conditions neither mitigation or adaption flourish.

Integrating mitigation and adaptation in cities of the Global South is hard precisely because these are places where there is rarely, if ever, a single or integrated system of urban management. Because city governments are unable to deal with large poor populations, the governance regimes of rich and poor residents are typically institutionally (legally and fiscally) separated in ways that suit the rich, but expose the poor. This is a point made repeatedly by vulnerability scholars (Pelling 2010; Ziervogel & Parnell 2009), but urban fragmentation is also of consequence to city scale mitigation efforts that must not only synthesise different modes of infrastructure and service provision, but must also embed these in law and in the service delivery norms of all residents (Graham & Marvin 2001).

Integrating climate programmes, whether focused on adaption or mitigation, into the core business of city government requires major institutional reform and a substantial expansion of capacity in order to execute the new reformed agendas (Taylor, under review). Different sectors and activities lend themselves to adaptation (usually land use and disaster risk response) and others to mitigation (typically led through energy or transport). It therefore means that internal institutional completion prevails in municipalities and other spheres of government. A more holistic view could ensure that good adaptation was also effective mitigation and that both efforts were strong directed at positively reducing short and long term poverty through the restructuring of the city form and function.

The lack of coordination in climate related mitigation and adaption activity in cities is also attributable to the fact that, as new issues without obvious professional champions or institutional drivers, they are rarely part of the core business of local government budget allocations (Cartwright et al. 2012). In the poorest contexts climate mitigation and adaptation programmes may be separate externally funded programmes. This programme and project format makes it much harder to move from policy level to implementation, especially in ways that are durable over time and scalable across the city or system of cities (AFD 2014). The difficulty of the integration of climate mitigation into the machine of managing a city more developmentally is compounded by the often naive assumption of the ease of the fusion of climate mitigation and

developmental agendas. As we will see in section three, there are conflicting rationalities within urban development that have bearing on the interface between mitigation and development discourses. Before unpacking the underlying assumptions of the poverty literature that play out in climate mitigation efforts it is useful to briefly reflect on why adaptation rather than mitigation has been the preferred focus of development advocates.

## MITIGATION, THE CINDERELLA OF POVERTY STUDIES

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If, as the previous section argued, it is so important that climate mitigation becomes an acknowledged pillar of anti-poverty sustainable development thinking, especially at the urban scale, why is it that poverty related climate action appears always to be couched in the language and focus of adaptation thinking? The reasons mitigation failed to get traction as an anti-poverty tool can be summarised as the outcome of the political vanguardism of climate adaptationists, the rapid emergence of a strong anti-rural lobby within climate science, donors' insistence on focussing climate action only on low income contexts and national governments' reluctance to embrace urban areas where mitigation concerns are concentrated. Together these forces retarded the early articulation of a link between poverty and climate mitigation everywhere, but especially in the Global South.

Across the Global South, including urban areas, lobbying, research and funding for climate adaptation overshadows mitigation by a considerable margin (Simon, 2010; Simon & Lech 2013). This is no coincidence. Led by powerful voices familiar with the global politics of development (with contributions from, for example, leaders from BRAC, IIED and the Rockefeller Foundation), there was a strategic choice made in early phases of climate science and mobilisation to differentiate mitigation and adaptation imperatives and to push for a climate adaptation as a priority.<sup>2</sup> In essence the view was that for the Global South an adaptation, not mitigation, focus would do more to realise poverty reduction under conditions of global climate change (Bicknell 2009). There was also a view that vulnerabilities tended to be focused on the larger extreme events, with smaller 'risk-accumulation processes' often overlooked as developmental rather than climate-related issues (Satterthwaite et al. 2007). This concern not only fed an adaptation focus, but also underscored adoption of the language of global environmental change, not only highlighting climate change connections to social justice (Parnell et al. 2008; Simon & Lech 2013).

The (informal, but influential) positions were no doubt made with the best intentions and were premised on the view that making mitigation the responsibilities of northern nations allowed for the rightful apportionment of blame for human-induced climate change. Also, stressing southern adaptation imperatives left southern parties free to focus on mobilising as beneficiaries from the potentially large climate adaptation fund, which was at one time thought to be larger than all donor assistance. Finally, stressing adaptation and downplaying mitigation facilitated the positioning of poor people to take adaptive action to protect themselves against predicted climate related hazards, this was seen as useful especially in contexts of weak and ineffective states whose planning capacity to regulate and enforce across the city scale in the way that is necessary to drive for mitigation was questionable.

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<sup>2</sup> By the time an urban climate change meeting was convened at Bellagio in 2007 this position was, if not fixed, clearly well entrenched across donors, scholars and activists.

In the early 1990s, as thought leaders galvanised their communities to respond to the science of climate change that was coming out of the IPCC, important decisions on what to prioritise were made. The first wave of climate responses, mitigation and adaptation, were heavily skewed to rural areas, especially agriculture and forestation, with powerful agenda-setting organisations, like START, ignoring and even being hostile to urban dimensions of climate change.<sup>3</sup> Big science, the home of mitigation research, was thus very slow to pick up on urban climate research. A simple tracking of the dates of urban and rural focussed climate mitigation research would confirm the belated recognition of the problems of cities. Such a scan of the published literature would also confirm the mismatch in research on poverty and mitigation at the city scale. Even the 2004 launch of the Urban Global Environmental Change Programme failed to fundamentally shift the early tangential trajectories of climate and poverty work, though the UGEC schema of urban feedbacks (Sánchez-Rodríguez et al. 2005) did much to reintegrate global change thinking. This poisoning of cities within planetary frame is now common place, even in urban studies circles not usually concerned with environmental resources and flows (Brenner et al. 2011).

Therefore, in poverty circles mitigation lost out initially because of the overt focus given to adaptation and cities lost out to climate mitigators' emphasis on forestation and rural land use cover issues. Central to the rural subsistence push was the (mistaken then and even more so now) view that poverty was concentrated in rural areas<sup>4</sup> and the, also widely challenged, view that subsistence held the key to enhanced rural livelihoods.<sup>5</sup>

The rapidly growing cities of the emerging economies also failed to attract attention of global science because of the underlying view, widely pushed by donors, that poverty was primarily a phenomena of low income nations. As a result the realities of middle income nations, where higher rates of consumption and the availability of greater resources for infrastructure meant that mitigation was a more significant issue than in ultra-low consumption infrastructure depleted contexts, were largely disregarded in the pro-adaptation design of climate related donor assistance and popular education. A similar pattern of urban mitigation neglect stemmed from the tendency of national governments to drive mitigation through large mitigation efforts such as the South African Long-Term Mitigation Scenarios (LTMS) process or major renewable energy programmes (Winkler & Marquard 2009). Large, expensive and ambitious programmes such as these are normally the preserve of national departments and the treasury and the devolution of power to make effective changes at the city scale are rare. The innovative city scale downscaling of the LTMS and other energy-based mitigation thinking has occurred has been largely donor funded and NGO driven (Lewis & Jooste 2011). South Africa is in fact very unusual in the Global South in that there is a major debate underway over the reallocation of powers and functions relating to the built environment, with devolution to the city scale that might enable significant local government action for mitigation. In poor countries and countries with high levels of urban poverty it is more common for the control over the institutional and fiscal levers of mitigation to be centralised. With that in mind it is tempting to imagine that the blocks to a better climate/poverty interface lie on the climate science and policy end of the spectrum. In fact there have, at least until recently, also been conceptual barriers within the poverty community that have mitigated against the adoption of mitigation as a pro-poor activity area.

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<sup>3</sup> Evidence of this pro-rural emphasis is found in the programme design of START's climate training throughout the 1990s and 2000s. Only recently have START actively engaged the urban agenda's relevance to climate (see 2013 their Durban meeting)

<sup>4</sup> See extensive discussions of the under-recognition of urban poverty in UN Habitat, Mitlin, Satterwrthwaite 2014 etc.

<sup>5</sup> Critiques of the carrying capacity of rural land for the expanded population ...

# HOW DOMINANT PERSPECTIVES ON POVERTY MILITATE AGAINST INTRODUCING A MITIGATION FOCUS TO CLIMATE CHANGE RESEARCH

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Thus far I have described why the climate community failed to engage a key problem of mitigation in poor cities. What may already be apparent is that the take-up of a new agenda, like climate mitigation, depended also on having a receptive host. In fact, the particular configuration of the poverty literature at the time of the late 1990s was such that it proved hostile to the structural interventions that climate mitigation implied and receptive to the more individualised and community-focussed interventions proposed by adaptation science. The overview that follows provides an outline of the shifts in the thinking about urban poverty, highlighting possible reasons why climate mitigation was not readily embraced. For a comprehensive overview of the evolution of poverty studies, see Satterthwaite & Mitlin 2013 and Mitlin & Satterthwaite 2013.

## Trends in poverty research of relevance to the take up of climate mitigation

The field of poverty studies is deeply divided and there are very different ideological and disciplinary traditions of approaching poverty. Poverty specialists are interested in whether poverty is absolute or relative and, if so, at what level. There is also keen interest in understanding the shifting patterns of poverty, leading to a major focus on chronic versus transient poverty. For our purposes of looking at poverty studies as a potential host for climate mitigation, the most important area of debate in poverty studies relates to shifts in the core definition of the problem. In short, before the 1980s the dominant view was that of economists who looked at lack of income. While for obvious reasons of data availability and professional influence these income-based ideas about how to assess poverty prevail, notwithstanding extensive critique of the narrowness of economic studies of poverty. Indeed it could be argued that the tendency to ignore mitigation in the Global South comes out of an economic view that those who spend little money have no significant global impact.

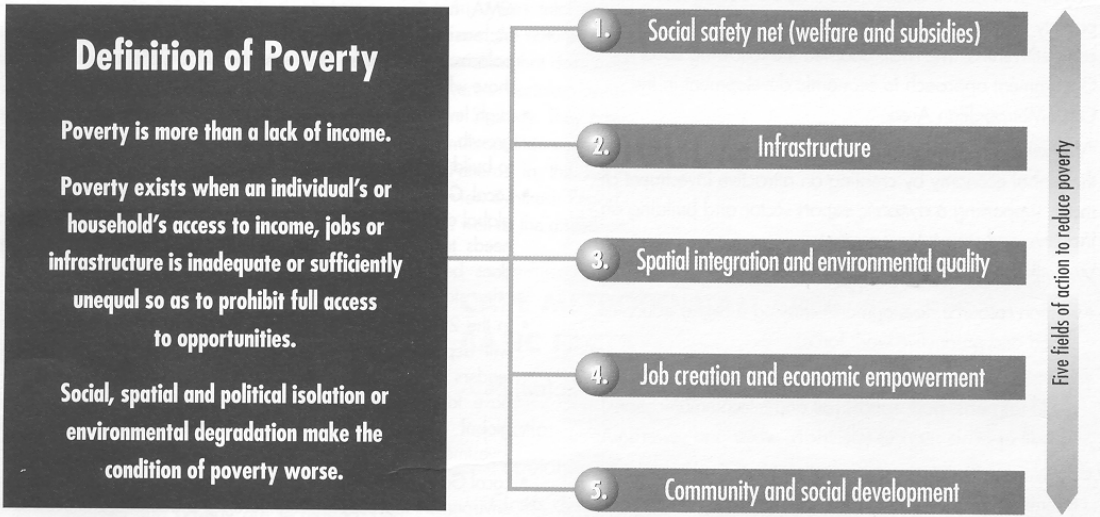
The second most powerful influence on poverty interventions came with engineers and bankers who, working largely with donors and the big multilateral agencies, focussed on access to basic needs and infrastructure. Rejection of these perspectives had as much to do with the politics of lending conditionality, especially as structural adjustment programmes (SAPs) in Africa, Latin America and Asia were widely rejected. In the process the idea that basic infrastructure provision as a core anti-poverty activity lost its status for many decades. For an excellent overview of the different approaches to poverty, see Wratten 1995. The resurgent interest in infrastructure and poverty across development circles (Pieterse & Hyman 2014) is now much more closely tied up to resource debates through green infrastructure and financing. This offers perhaps one of the most exciting opportunities to fuse the climate mitigation and poverty reduction debates.

Throughout the 1990s and early 2000s both economic and infrastructure views were displaced as the leading edge of poverty studies, led by views that had a much more social perspective and that drew inspiration from noble prize winner, Sen (1999), and influential feminists such as Moser (1998). Ideas of capabilities and assets provided the starting point for a livelihood approach to development. The focus is thus on harnessing the abilities and resources of the poor themselves and their relationships within a household and community. These micro-level relationships

enable the poor to access resources, including natural assets, and provides the lens through which they relate to their wider neighbourhoods, the broader economy and natural systems. In the absence of adequate employment or social safety nets, the livelihood perspective has gained considerable attention as a means of reducing poverty by assisting the poor to build on their own assets through either using or abusing the natural system. It also provided an accommodating intellectual frame for climate adaptation research, which flourished using the essential elements of the assets and livelihoods perspective (Bicknell et al. 2009; Frayne et al. 2012).

Livelihoods research has been criticised for being apolitical, for making the poor responsible for their own poverty and for ignoring the potential role of the state (Parnell & Robinson 2012). There are two immediate intellectual alternatives to the livelihood work: one a focus on the developmental state and another in foregrounding the long established ideas of environmental justice. The notion of environmental justice, or the mobilisation for social justice in environmental matters, refers to the wellbeing and rights of past and future generations. It is a movement that emphasises the overarching structures of inequality, for example in water rights, the location of waste and other hazards. Internationally, there is growing attention to the ‘environmental entitlement’ movement that emphasises the rights of the poor to good quality and healthy neighbourhoods that are free of hazards and pollutants; a focus that sits well with climate mitigation projects. Opposition to degradation has, alongside the struggle to improve livelihood opportunities, become a new political vehicle of the poor, including in South Africa (Lawhon & Patel 2013). Environmental justice, as a social movement, should be enabling of a politics of mitigation as well as an adaption, though the latter has dominated.

This brief overview suggests, improperly, that there is a linear evolution of ideas in which one perspective gives way to another. This is not entirely true, differential understandings of poverty tend to co-exist, even while their influence rises and falls. In an acknowledgement of the value of the different traditions of poverty definition and measurement it is now commonplace for a multiple definition of poverty to be asserted, such as the one from Cape Town illustrated in Figure 4 (CMC, 2008).



Over the last decade or so, while poverty is almost always depicted as multi-dimensional, the city itself — how it is built, structured and managed — has become a priority as explanations of urban poverty have increasingly placed an emphasis on human agency, livelihood strategies and community mobilisation (Rakodi & Lloyd-Jones 2002; Satterthwaite & Mitlin 2013). The focus on people-centred or bottom-up views of the last two decades are in no way wrong, but the human emphasis has meant that the structural and institutional role of the city in shaping the experiences of poverty and the

responses to poverty are now relatively poorly understood (Pieterse 2008). In the face of the boosterish calls to let the poor take more control of their lives, anti-poverty action such as that which would be achieved through climate mitigation activities that work at the city scale, like enforced solar heating or improved public and non motorised transport, is reduced to oppressive, invasive or post political technocratic urban management.

It has been suggested that the way poverty has been approached over the last two decades has resulted in failure to recognise the way cities are structured, physically and organisationally, and that this in turn impacts directly on the wellbeing of the poor, over multiple generations. The focus on people or agency, not structures and institutions appears to have distorted reform in urban planning, budget allocations and other mechanisms of urban transformation. A corrective is due that brings the city back into public policy debates. There is evidence that several authors within the broad poverty community have already shifted the overall orientation of the field. There is, for example, burgeoning literature focussed on urban infrastructure and poverty (Silver 2014; Jaglan 2014; Pieterse & Hyman 2014), on the importance not only of improved public transport for the poor, but also a push for more systematic large multi-modal transport interventions in poor cities (Brand & Davila 2011). There is a resurgent interest in what states do for the urban poor (Ballard 2013), as well as the enduring specialist areas of urban poverty that are bound up with sectorial elements of the built environment, like sanitation and housing.

The poverty field is shifting rapidly with a renewed emphasis on the role of states and a concerted effort to locate poverty and human vulnerability in, more systems-approaches to urban change, like that offered by resilience thinking. The potential of these changes to link better to climate science is easily seen in the scaling up of the disaster risk response from the early focus on individual and household preparedness, to more recent attention to comprehensive city and national disaster readiness and responses (Simon & Lech 2014). Similarly, biodiversity science has engaged the urban agenda, including on issues of poverty, and is driving greater attention to the city scale and to issues of governance (Elmqvist et al. 2013) in the process.

## CONCLUSION: CAN CLIMATE MITIGATION AND POVERTY COME TOGETHER?

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Throughout this paper there is the suggestion that it would be appropriate for climate mitigation and urban poverty strategies to align more closely. Understanding the intellectual and political reasons why this has not, hitherto, happened clears the way for a more direct endeavour to link climate mitigation and poverty reduction as twinned developmental goals, as has been more successfully achieved in the climate adaptation agenda. For cities of the Global South, a clearer integration of all aspects of climate action would aid already overburdened local governments. Better alignment of adaptation and mitigation in planning processes in ways that would further the public good and the interests of the urban poor would further simplify the massive changes required in how cities designed, built and run.

Unfortunately, some structural barriers remain in the forums where the climate mitigation and poverty agendas should be jointly pushed. For example, the current structure of IPCC reporting, which only belatedly took on any urban issues at all, continues to split mitigation and adaptation, thus reinforcing the north/mitigation, south/adaptation split. The almost complete exclusion of cities in the developing world from the C40 has begun to change with the recent inclusion of three

more African cities at the 2014 summit in Johannesburg, but until membership of mitigation lobbying and organising bodies like C40 include imperatives from large cities in poor countries, where one would have anticipated a clear mitigation policy to deal with transport and energy demands, as well as building codes and forward planning in land use, a mitigation agenda with global traction will not be formulated.

The single biggest hope for inserting a mitigation agenda into the core of development thinking comes with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) process now under debate. However, despite the shift to a more sustainable emphasis, climate is currently framed as a separate goal that is devoid of poverty related targets and it is likely to be linked to biodiversity through the process of slimming down the total number of SDGs. There is a parallel process for a stand alone urban goal, which is currently not linked to climate debates.<sup>6</sup> Careful attention needs to be given to the targets and indicators, which will drive the overall SDG process, as this is what will influence international and national development priorities. For the new development approach, as articulated in the SDGs, to succeed there will need to be some realignment and reconciliation of the way both poverty and climate mitigation are conceived.

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<sup>6</sup> UN-Habitat, UCLG, ICLEI, Cities Alliance, Metropolis, SDSN (18<sup>th</sup> September 2013), *Why the World needs an Urban SDG?* Accessed on 12 Feb 2014 from <http://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/2569130918-SDSN-Why-the-World-Needs-an-Urban-SDG.pdf>. See also [www.urbansdg.org](http://www.urbansdg.org)



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