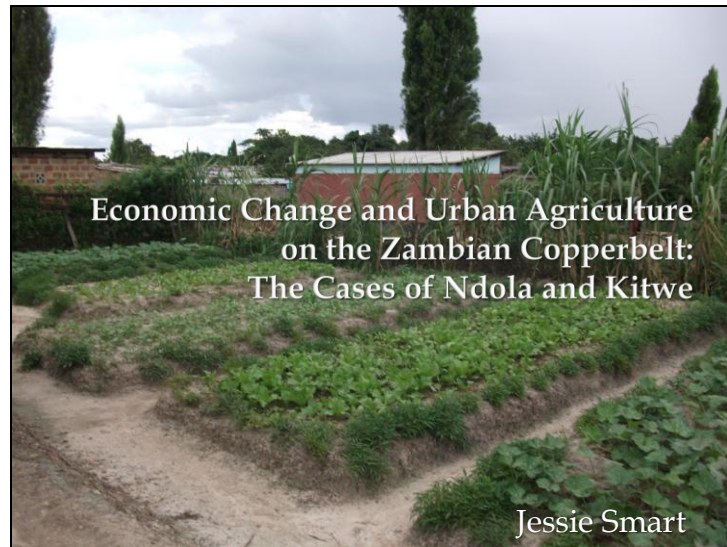



Slide 1



Hello everyone, my name is Jessie Smart and I am a MA student from the Geography Department at Otago University. Today I will be speaking on my thesis project, "Economic Change and Urban Agriculture on the Zambian Copperbelt: the Cases of Ndola and Kitwe."


Urban Agriculture & Development

- ◉ Existed throughout history & across cultures
 - Especially important as a survival strategy in times of crisis
- ◉ Today, UA is increasing in popularity in developing and developed world in the face of increasing economic and environmental pressure
 - Globally producing a third of urban food & involving +800 million people
- ◉ Valuable tool for urban development
- ◉ Needs institutional support



1. Urban agriculture has existed for as long as we have lived in cities, and has always been important to the survival of urban populations, especially during times of crisis. Now a key focus of programs worldwide, UA has been on the development agenda since the 1980's, seen as a possible solution to the increasing difficulties posed by growing urban populations. It's importance lies not only in the fact that it approaches development in a holistic manner, tackling issues from the economic to the environmental, but that it is a strategy that occurs independently of outside encouragement. Especially in light of the ever-increasing issues of HIV and malnutrition, for poor urban populations, urban agriculture's potential for improving lives and livelihoods is immense and it continues to be both significant and relevant in the modern world. However, city authorities do not always support the practice and many cases of crop slashing and livestock destruction have been documented. A changed understanding of what is and isn't appropriate in the urban environment is needed and in a supportive institutional environment UA has proven a valuable tool for urban development.

Ndola and Kitwe, Copperbelt Province, Zambia




The map displays Zambia and its neighboring countries: Angola to the west, Zimbabwe to the south, Mozambique to the south-east, Malawi to the east, and Tanzania to the north-east. The Copperbelt region is highlighted in yellow, and two black arrows point to the cities of Ndola and Kitwe within this region. A legend in the top-left corner identifies symbols for international boundaries, roads, rivers, national capital, and cities or towns. A scale bar indicates distances up to 200 miles and 200 kilometers. The map is dated 2007.

- ⊙ Four decades of economic shocks all but destroyed the formal economy
- ⊙ Urban agriculture one of the survival strategies employed
 - Food security
 - Income generation
- ⊙ Adoption of a pro-UA policy in March 2010, Ndola

2. After deciding on urban agriculture as the broad theme of my thesis, Ndola and Kitwe in the Copperbelt of Zambia arose as an interesting case study. Over the last four decades, Zambia has experienced an ongoing economic crisis, directly linked to the national economy's dependence on the mining industry. Unprepared for the severity of the economic decline which occurred, Zambians have come to heavily rely on informal means of income generation. This is most especially the case in urban centres throughout the Copperbelt, where economic decline was most pronounced and in Ndola and Kitwe, urban agriculture has proven an essential survival and coping strategy in the face of continuing economic difficulty. The importance of urban agriculture has not been ignored by local officials and in March this year the Ndola City Council adopted a pro-urban agriculture policy aiming to improve and manage the effects and experiences of urban agriculture in the city. This progressive policy has not been mimicked in Kitwe which provided me an ideal opportunity for comparison of the effects of supportive versus non-supportive institutional environments.

Research Objectives & Methods


- ◉ Importance as a survival strategy during economic change
- ◉ Connecting UA to development concerns
- ◉ Situation in Ndola & Kitwe
- ◉ Supportive and non-supportive environments
- ◉ Surveys with urban farmers (63)
- ◉ Semi-structured in-depth interviews with key informants (32)



3. The objectives of my research are to assess the importance of urban agriculture as an informal self-provisioning activity in times of economic change, to explore how best urban agriculture might be connected with development concerns, to expand on the understanding of the situations in Ndola and Kitwe and to compare the effect of supportive vs. non-supportive institutional environments on urban farming. During April and May this year, I spent three weeks in each Kitwe and Ndola, first sourcing grey literature, exploring newspaper archives and observing urban agriculture and then conducting interviews with 63 farmers and 32 key informants. Urban farmers were sourced from two areas in each city, defined by income ranges in order to assess the differences between socio-economic groups. Key informants consisted of representatives from local government bodies and community or non-governmental organisations.

Results

- In Ndola many NGO projects involving UA
- Urban agriculture department created within the City Council
- Alternative solutions to urban development
- In Kitwe, swimming pools converted into fish ponds for aquaculture
- Officials willing but lacking coordination and confidence



4. Urban agriculture was exceedingly common in both cities with 95% of all those approached having a farm or garden. Socially, the practice was well embedded and nearly as common in medium to high income areas as it was in low income. Key challenges for urban agriculture in Kitwe and Ndola support current literature and include, but are not limited to, problems with water, theft, land access or security, capital and pollution. By the time I visited Ndola the pro-urban agriculture policy was already affecting some positive effects. By involving the city council, the NGO responsible for bring the policy to Ndola was able to engage actors from a variety of sources, promoting dialogue, participation and cooperation. The Ndola City Council has recognised the potential of urban agriculture to tackle development issues which range from waste management to health and are working to update and remove archaic bylaws which prohibit certain agricultural activities in the city. The policy aims to give the local government a degree of control, while promoting the recognition and understanding of the challenges faced by urban farmers. By providing a legal framework, the municipality and other branches of local government, as well as NGO's, are given more freedom to improve and support urban agriculture activities.

For Kitwe, without a framework like Ndola's, the general attitude of officials was one of 'what can we do'. Officials agreed on the importance of UA but lamented the lack of cooperation between the Ministry of Agriculture, the City Council and NGOs. Many commented that without the legislative framework there was nothing they could do but because of the necessity of UA from food and economic security the general way of dealing with UA was to "turn a blind eye".

Sadly, there were a number of reports of maize slashing in the past year and it seemed as though the lax policing of bylaws was more to do with institutional capacity rather than progressive understanding of the matter.

Discussion and Recommendations

- ◉ Progress in Ndola very promising, if positive effects result it will not be hard to convince Kitwe to replicate the policy
- ◉ Needs support and coordination of efforts to fully realise potential
 - Health and nutrition
 - Urban environment
 - Education
 - Income generation: UA as a business



5. Without positive official support urban agriculture cannot reach its full potential. Urban agriculture can be a valuable strategy for mitigating the adverse environmental effects of urban life, including the management of waste and water and air quality, but without proper education UA can have negative effects in terms of health and safety and pollution. Through nutrition, UA can improve the nutritional status of the poor and sick and is already being used in conjunction with HIV mitigation programmes but again education is needed. Sustainable, low-tech farming methods and solutions as well as nutrition and health are just some of the areas that coordination between government departments, NGO's and farmers could dramatically improve. Such educational interventions would be non-invasive and promote self-sufficiency for sustainable and long-term improvement of living standards throughout economic social groups.