

Draft – please do not quote without permission from the author.

Changing Landscapes of Collective Organizing in the Informal Economy¹

Ilda Lindell

e-mail: ilda.lindell@nai.uu.se

The Nordic Africa Institute, Uppsala, Sweden

Introduction to forthcoming collection: Lindell, I (ed), *Africa's Informal Workers: Collective Agency, Alliances and Transnational Organizing*. London: Zed Books.

To be presented at 11th Conference of the Association for Heterodox Economics, London, 9-12 July 2009. Session “Socio-economics of the informal economy in the developing world: social networks and sustainability”.

INTRODUCTION

Processes of informalization of livelihoods loom large in the world today. The phenomenon is far from new and in many settings it has deep historical roots. But we seem to be witnessing new waves of informalization whereby new dynamics are expanding the number of people relying on forms of work beyond the purview of state regulation or lacking legal protection (Alsayyad, 2004; Bryceson, 2006; Cross and Morales, 2007). Such types of work are today visible in many post-industrial economies, and in the South, rather than regressing, informality has developed into a central and pervasive feature of many societies. Powerful global and local forces are driving contemporary informalization, although its contours will assume different forms in different places.² The emergence of global production networks and the deregulation of labour conditions are contributing to the casualization and increased precariousness of work in many contexts (Bayat, 2004; Cross and Morales, 2007; Gallin, 2001). Large firms increasingly make use of casual labour, making of the informal economy an important sphere of accumulation (Castells and Portes, 1989). At the same time, neoliberal policies of privatization and economic liberalization being implemented across many countries in the South have resulted in large scale retrenchments and to a decline in formal employment opportunities. This has usually resulted in floods of new entrants into the informal economy and in a dramatic increase in self-employment (Bryceson, 2006; Hansen and Vaa, 2004). In the context of economic liberalisation that breaks down trade barriers, informal economies have also tended to become more deeply enmeshed in international commodity circuits and global economic processes. Clearly, the above trends have created new opportunities for some groups, but conditions and incomes have also tended to deteriorate for large numbers of people that depend on the informal economy for survival. Indeed, a diversity of groups make use today of the informal economy for a wide range of

¹ This paper is the introduction for a forthcoming collection of articles resulting from a conference with the theme “Informalizing Economies and New Organizing Strategies in Africa” held in Uppsala, Sweden, 20-22 April 2007, and organised under the auspices of the Nordic Africa Institute. I wish to thank all the participants for the stimulating and challenging discussions that often took us into new ground. Thank you also to the colleagues that took up the role of discussants at the conference, as well as to Amin Kamete, Gunilla Andrae and Amanda Hammar for insightful comments on a draft of this introduction.

² For a thorough discussion of the multiple and contradicting forces involved in the production of informality in an African context (including popular forces, the state and capital), see Lourenço-Lindell (2002).

purposes, that range from survival to accumulation (Alsayyad, 2004; Hansen and Vaa, 2004; Lourenço-Lindell, 2002).

But people making a living in the informal economy today do not only have to deal with the forces of the market and with intense economic competition. For as their numbers swell, governments and political elites seldom remain indifferent. Some governments opt for restrictive and violent measures towards segments of the informal 'workforce'. This government hostility is far from new, but appears to be intensifying in a great variety of contexts (Amis, 2004; Brown, 2006; Hansen, 2004; Lindell and Kamete, 2007; Roy, 2004; Setšabi, 2006). At the same time, many politicians have come to regard these growing crowds as 'vote banks' (Mitlin, 2004). Particularly in the context of multi-party politics, the informal economy has often become a sphere of intense political competition. The political terrain in which livelihood struggles are being fought is thus also changing.

These are only some of the challenges that people relying on informal income activities are facing today. The individual and household responses are already well documented in a large body of literature on 'livelihoods' and 'coping strategies', as well as in an established research tradition that focuses on individual forms of everyday 'resistance' (for example, Lourenço-Lindell, 2002; Bayat, 2004; Rakodi and Lloyd-Jones, 2002; Scott, 1985; Tripp, 1997). But there is a need to inquire into a wider range of responses, particularly the variety of collective responses that can be found today around informal livelihood issues in a great variety of settings. This collection therefore specifically focuses on collectively organized responses prompted by the contemporary trends in informalization and changed livelihood opportunities in the informal economy, in the context of contemporary deep economic, political and social transformations. The empirical focus is on Sub-Saharan Africa, but many findings and discussions in this collection are of relevance for other regions of the South undergoing similar processes.

Mounting economic and political pressures are turning informal economies into highly politicised fields. A major concern in the collection is with the politics in which collective organizations in the informal economy are today engaged and embedded. This politics is broad and complex and may involve relations with a range of local and international actors, as a number of the chapters show. The extent and ways in which such collective organizations attempt to exercise influence on dominating power, while surfacing in many of the contributions, are a central concern in the chapters in Part Two of the collection – where the state emerges as an important actor, albeit not the only one.

The other major and related concern in the collection pertains to the changing patterns and dynamics of collective organizing around informal livelihoods issues, in the context of wider processes of change. Two particular axes of change are discussed at greater length, which correspond to novel trends in collective organizing that are becoming visible in Africa and beyond and that are still scarcely researched. Firstly, current attempts at organizing across the formal-informal 'divide'³ are investigated (Part Three). Of key interest is the growing occurrence of organizing initiatives by trade unions reaching out to the informal economy, and the emergence in some countries of a close relationship between 'traditional' labour organizations and self-organized 'informal workers'. The discussions also contribute to bridging another deep 'divide', that between labour studies and 'informal sector' studies.

³ 'Divide' in this context is not to be interpreted in terms of economic separation between an informal a formal 'sector'; rather, it refers to the *organizational* divide that has kept apart workers at both ends of the formal-informal continuum.

Secondly, the collection explores the widening scales of collective organizing by some groups in the informal economy, in particular the internationalization of such organizing (Part Four). It uncovers how some groups increasingly participate in international movements, engage with international governing bodies and respond to global processes (for example the growing Chinese presence in local informal economies). Such an inquiry counters a deeply entrenched view that confines the politics of informality to the local and national scene.

In addition to the key areas of concern above around which the collection is structured, a number of contributions highlight the historical dimensions of collective organizing, and shed light upon how forms of association with deep historical roots are changing in response to wider transformations. More generally, by addressing the above issues in specific economic, cultural and political contexts, the contributions in this volume provide a diverse picture of the politics and dynamics of collective organizing around informal livelihood issues in Africa.

This introductory chapter provides a broad overview of the changing landscape of organizing initiatives as well as of the re-structuring of patterns and dynamics of association in informal economies in Africa (and beyond). Important dimensions of change are discussed and key issues raised. The chapter proceeds with a discussion of the emergence of new organized actors using new discourses and strategies; the impacts of social and economic differentiation on the organizational environment; how historical forms of association are changing in the context of today's challenges and how associational divisions along the lines of gender, age, ethnicity and race are evolving or being re-drawn. This is followed by a discussion of emerging attempts at organizing across the formal-informal 'divide' and of the internationalisation of collective organizing among informal workers. The general picture that will emerge is that of a highly diverse and increasingly complex landscape of organized actors in the informal economy, addressing multiple 'targets' and engaging at widening scales. This complex landscape, it will be argued, provides the grounds for an equally complex politics of informality. The chapter concludes with a review of the individual contributions highlighting insights of relevance for the key areas of concern in this collection outlined above.

Delimiting the 'informal'

The informal economy can be understood as being constituted by social and political process and as constituting a sphere whose shifting boundaries involve social struggles (Castells and Portes, 1989:33). People in the informal economy, however, are not passive or simply at the receiving end of such processes. Some influential analyses (including by Castells and Portes, 1989) have tended to underplay the agency of informal 'workers' and to depict them as incapable of organizing collectively, a capacity that they reserve for the traditional 'working class'. Contrary to such views, people in the informal economy are here understood as political actors, who may organize collectively, and actively engage in various, and often contradictory ways, with those processes.

Many reviews of different definitions of and perspectives on the informal economy already exist (see among others, Alsayyad, 2004; Amis, 2004), which makes unnecessary a lengthy discussion here. But some clarification is in order concerning what is meant by 'informal economy' in this chapter. A useful conceptualization, by Castells and Portes (1989:13-4), refers to economic informality as consisting of a particular 'status of labour' (labour that lacks social benefits, is undeclared, etc); of hazardous 'conditions of work' (in terms of health, safety etc); as well as of a 'particular form of management of some firms' or the 'unrecorded practices of large corporations', whereby production relations that are unregulated by the state become part of the flexibilization strategies of those corporations. In this conception, the

informal economy is thus not restricted to the small scale and survivalist activities of the poor – an understanding that deeply informs this chapter. Similar views of the informal economy focusing on the characteristics of employment relations have been popularized in recent years by the International Labour Office (ILO) and embraced by international activist networks (ILO, 2002, 2002a; WIEGO, 2002:11, 23). The ILO revised its definition of ‘informal economy’ to encompass informal work arrangements in small scale/unregistered enterprises and in registered/large scale firms. This has emerged in to its new commitment to promoting decent work across the formal-informal continuum. Informal employment was then re-defined as *any* type of employment lacking secure contracts, social protection or worker benefits: the self-employed and own account workers in unregistered enterprises; employers and their employees in such enterprises, including unpaid family workers; those employed informally by registered firms, including industrial casual and day workers, contract workers lacking worker benefits; and domestic workers (Carr and Chen, 2004:4; Chen et al., 2002:5; WIEGO, 2002:11, 23). These conceptualizations lump together a wide range of work situations, relations and groups subject to very different kinds of structural constraints, and thus have modest analytical use. But they are useful in that they call attention to the current expansion of unprotected forms of work and highlight the new historical meaning of contemporary informalization (see Castells and Portes, 1989:13; Alsayyad, 2004). In this chapter, the informal economy is understood as such an umbrella and common-sense notion. It refers to a broad and loosely delimited field of economic activity where work relations are partly or wholly unregulated by state law – even if such a basic definition is not without problems (see Lourenço-Lindell, 2002:20-21). Such a broad definition of informality allows room for locally specific relations and forms of work, thus avoiding the disadvantages of strict and universal definitions. More precise definitions of informality must be situated in particular contexts. People depending on some kind of informal work are often referred to in this chapter as ‘informal actors’, ‘informals’ or ‘informal workers’. Such categories unavoidably subsume a great diversity of people, which is hopefully compensated by an emphasis on diversity and differentiation in this chapter.

THE EMERGENCE OF NEW ORGANIZED ACTORS

Deepening economic, political and social cleavages and rising exclusion of various forms are giving rise to new cycles of protest and to new kinds of social movements in many countries in the South (Boron and Lechini, 2005; Garretón, 1997; Lindberg and Sverrisson, 1997; Oommen, 1997; Soane et al., 2005). Various sections of ‘the marginalized’ - the unemployed, peasants, women, cultural minorities etc - have organized into a great diversity of movements and organizations. They are driven by a range of material concerns (rising prices, declining access to public services and the movements of the ‘landless,’ the ‘roofless’, the ‘jobless’ etc) as well as by the desire to assert ethnic and cultural identities – often in combination (Oommen, 1997; Soane et al., 2005).⁴ There are profound differences between countries and regions in the transformations taking place and the configuration of civil societies. But this general trend is also visible in Sub-Saharan Africa, where the hardships resulting from market-oriented policies and the modest improvements in many countries in terms of substantive democracy and opportunities for participation have given rise to “new forms of resistance and organization (...) which simultaneously try to address both the economic crisis and the inability of the elite to transform the political system into an efficient agent of democracy and development” (Lindberg and Sverrisson, 1997:13; see also Ballard, 2005).

⁴ A parallel development has been the proliferation and increasing influence of developmental Non-Governmental Organizations, which some have seen as serving mainly neoliberal agendas and even ‘contributing to the demobilization and disappearance of popular movements’ (see for example Boron and Lechini, 2005:28).

Since the 1990s, we have thus witnessed the proliferation of civil associations in Africa, particularly in urban areas (Aina, 1997; Ballard et al., 2006; Olukoshi, 2005; Tostensen et al, 2001). While a share of these initiatives have been induced by external funding agencies and the initiative of powerful local groups, there is also a growing number of organized groups contesting current policies, claiming recognition, basic socio-economic rights and participation. This burgeoning civil society is not exclusively middle-class driven, as popular forces are also articulating their own claims (Aina, 1997; Lindberg and Sverrisson, 1997:14). Many among these new movements address particular manifestations of deepening exclusion and are articulated as redistribution struggles, while others address other sources of exclusion, such as discrimination against women, migrants etc (Ballard, 2005). It is in this broader context of reconfiguring civil societies in the South that the emergence of a new generation of collective contestations around informal livelihood issues ought to be understood.

There is great geographical variation in the forms and extent of organization, reflecting different economic, political, cultural and social contexts and the particular histories of different societies in the South. In Latin America, for example, where there is a long experience of broad based popular mobilisation, informal workers have organized for decades and frequently exhibit a high degree of collective organization today (see Cohen et al., 2000; Cross, 1998; Roever, 2006). In Sub-Saharan Africa, kinship, ethnic and religious affinities have structured many forms of organization and most associations in the informal economy have been described as ‘inward-looking’, i.e. mainly welfare or business oriented (Mitullah, 2003; Brown and Lyons, this volume). This picture is however becoming more diverse, following trends in other regions in the South (see War on Want et al., 2006).

We see today, across a variety of contexts in the South (including Africa), the multiplication of collective grassroots initiatives articulating a concern with vulnerable groups in the informal economy, engaging with key centres of power and contesting unfavourable policies and regulations in visible ways. The Self-Employed Women’s Association (SEWA) in India could be considered one of the pioneers in this respect. Created in the early 1970s, it is today one of the world’s largest informal economy organizations (Gallin, 2004). It came to inspire the creation and agendas of organizations in other countries, as well as of grassroots networks across countries and regions. Many of these ‘new’ actors engage in advocacy and are making themselves visible through a variety of strategies, including the use of the media, of publicity campaigns and protests. Many are also making use of litigation and the courts to assert the right to a livelihood, contest evictions and harassment (Cohen et al., 2000; Setšabi, 2006; Brown and Lyons in this volume). A number of informal economy organizations are also ‘scaling up’ by creating federated bodies, some at the national level and beyond, which appear to be opening new possibilities for political intervention – national federations exist for example in Kenya, Tanzania, Zambia, India and Peru (Cohen, et al., 2000; ILO, 2007; see also chapters by Mitullah and Brown and Lyons in this collection).

Importantly, a new discourse has also emerged during the last few years that places the rights of people in the informal economy at its core. This discourse is evident among a growing number of local organizations and in the agendas of international networks (such as StreetNet International and Women in Informal Employment Globalizing and Organizing). It has also gained considerable international currency, particularly when the International Labour Organization (ILO) adopted the ‘decent work’ agenda at its International Labour Conference in 2002 (ILO, 2002, 2002a). Some elements of this general discourse can be discerned (Cohen et al., 2000; WIEGO, n. d.; Horn, 2003; Gallin, 2004). For example, it is an assertive discourse according to which people making a living in the informal economy are seen to

make a substantial contribution to their national economies. Consequently, from this perspective, informal income activities should to be recognized by governments. Firstly, governments should allow informals to have a say in planning and policy making. Secondly, they should decriminalise informal activities and give them legal status, thereby granting informal operators the right to earn a living, to be free from harassment etc. Organized people in the informal economy increasingly refer to themselves, or are referred to, as ‘workers’, claiming that they should be legally recognised as such, be entitled to basic workers’ rights, and enjoy legal protection (Lund and Skinner, 1999:30-34; ILO:2002, 2002a). There is an increasing emphasis on the importance of collective organizing and representation in the struggle for the attainment and protection of the above rights, as well as for ensuring representation of the concerns of informal workers in the relevant forums (Horn, 2003; ILO, 2002, 2002a). Accordingly, the recognition of informal workers’ organizations and of their right to organize is considered to be crucial.

There are thus internationalizing discourses that for the first time stress the rights of informal people and the central importance of collective organizing for achieving those rights. Such discourses are novel and powerful in various ways. They challenge the hegemonic views held by political elites in many developing countries of informality as a marginal and insignificant economic sphere. They also contest governments’ discursive references to the illegality of informal livelihoods, so often used to justify forceful acts against disadvantaged groups in the informal economy. The increasing reference to people in the informal economy as ‘workers’ is also forcing a reformulation of the notion of the ‘worker’, contesting its exclusive property by the traditional ‘working class’ – even if the term risks obfuscating the great heterogeneity contained in the informal economy.

To be sure, there are considerable obstacles to collective organizing in the informal economy (ILO, 2002), as several of the contributions in this volume acknowledge (see particularly the chapters by Mitullah and Jimu). Lack of material resources, of leadership skills and of political connections are among the problems often encountered by vulnerable groups in their attempts to organize. Migrants, poor women, the disabled, the aged, youth and children, often found in the poorest layers of the informal economy, seem to face particular constraints in organizing and are often excluded from many ongoing initiatives. In addition, many organizations continue to be very limited in size and scope, isolated or restricted to particular communities or economic niches, with limited ability for political intervention, even at the locality level (Cohen et al., 2000; Mitlin, 2004). But the picture is now more diverse, making it worthwhile to study those instances where disadvantaged groups have been able to organize in spite of these limitations. Among the new generation of organized actors, the range of success certainly varies a lot. But in some cases, these organizations have been able to secure some rights, to establish a dialogue with the authorities or to get their interests represented in policy-making and implementation (Cohen et al., 2000; Mitullah, this collection). It can be argued that the ability to organize collectively plays a central role in such achievements (Amis, 2004; Mitullah, in this volume; Setšabi, 2006). This new generation of organized actors voicing the concerns of the vulnerable must, however, be understood in the context of a much wider range of organized interests and actors that can be found today in the informal economy.

DIFFERENTIATION AND ASSOCIATIONAL DYNAMICS

Contemporary informal economies are heterogeneous and highly differentiated. They are traversed by hierarchies, divisions and inequalities often structured along lines of income level, gender, age, ethnicity and race, whose specific contours are time and place specific.

Contemporary dynamics appear to have an impact on those divisions and on the social composition of informal economies in many contexts. This and the next section provide some illustrations of how such changes are re-shaping associational patterns and dynamics.

Marked economic differentiation has become a feature of many informal economies today (Alsayyad, 2004; Bayat, 2004; Hansen and Vaa 2004:11). These economies can no longer be considered to be the exclusive domain of the ‘working poor’ and the vulnerable. Rather than a level field, they contain today considerable income differences. They also contain a multiplicity of relations of employment and dependence in which individuals are differently positioned (as employers, employees, apprentices, suppliers, commissioned workers etc). Indeed, a great variety of groups today operate in the informal economy, with varying degrees of economic capacity and for a wide variety of purposes that range from survival to accumulation (Alsayyad, 2004; Hansen and Vaa 2004:11; Lourenço-Lindell, 2002). Groups commanding resources, contacts and skills have ventured into the informal economy and have sometimes been in a position to benefit and even thrive in the context of economic liberalisation and crisis. These groups may also organize themselves to pursue their interests. For example, employers in the informal economy are creating their own organizations or joining existing employer associations, as is the case in Kenya and Ghana (ILO, 2007). Cross-border traders, many with sizeable businesses, also organize into associations, as for example in Mozambique and Zambia (Hansen and Nchito, this collection; Lindell, 2008a). Leading figures in hierarchical business networks are often represented in organizations such as Chambers of Commerce, which often enjoy access to the state, as in Senegal and Guinea-Bissau (Brown and Lyons, this collection; Lourenço-Lindell, 2002). Some of these are thus well-resourced associations, standing in contrast to associations with overwhelmingly poor members.

Actors with advantageous positions in the informal economy may organize to maintain and further those positions. This raises the question of how better-resourced associations relate to organizations representing the concerns of poorer workers in the informal economy in particular contexts – do they ignore them, work against or with them? In addition, disadvantaged people may find themselves in dependent relations with those better-off actors (who may be their employers, suppliers etc). This may have implications for their ability to organize and voice their concerns – not least given the high levels of precarity that tend to characterise their work and livelihoods. Importantly, however, ‘the poor’ or the ‘vulnerable’ in the informal economy are by no means a unified category with the same interests and inclinations (see Lindell, forthcoming a).

The great economic differentiation that characterises informal economies today is not simply expressed in organizational forms that are divided along lines of economic capacity. A share of informal economy organizations in Africa integrates people of different economic standing – both in terms of income and position in employment relations⁵. This ‘multi-class’ composition can be found both in many membership based associations of more recent origins and in hierarchical networks (both male and female ones) with a longer history (see chapters by Prag, Clark, Brown and Lyons, and Scheld in this collection), as further discussed below. Better-off individuals (in terms of incomes, education, contacts etc) tend to have easier access

⁵ This can be found for example among some trader associations – such as the largest one in Mozambique described in Lindell (2008a), encompassing both poor and better off members; as well as among associations in the transport sector – as is the case of the Ghana Private Road Transport Union which includes both vehicle owners and hired drivers (Adu-Amankwah, 1999).

to positions of leadership⁶. This requires attentiveness to the power relations within associations and to the issue of whose interests such associations serve – particularly where they claim to represent and defend the interests of poor members. But one should also contemplate the possibility that, in some instances, such ‘multi-class’ associations may also hold potential for overcoming some of the heavy constraints that often deter poorer groups from organizing on their own.

Other dimensions of differentiation (besides income and position in employment relations) are also of importance for understanding current associational dynamics in the informal economy. One such important dimension pertains to gender. Economic liberalization and neoliberal policies set in motion certain trends that have changed the conditions of women’s participation in the informal economy in many places. A documented trend in a wide variety of settings is that women tend to be over-represented at the lowest income levels and that many are experiencing a worsening of their conditions (Chen et al., 2002; ILO, 2002:31-2; Lourenço-Lindell, 2002:157-8). At the same time, there is also evidence of increasing economic differentiation among women and women’s associations may also reflect these economic cleavages (as the chapters by Prag, Clark, and Nchito and Hansen in this collection indicate). Women, especially those at the lower end of the informal economy, also appear to be particularly vulnerable to the hostility of governments (partly by virtue of the often exposed locations of their work) and to being discriminated against in consultation processes (Cohen et al., 2000; Clark, this volume). Well positioned women in affluent networks, however, are sometimes in a position to exercise informal influence on political elites (Prag, this collection).

In the context of economic and political challenges, women’s associations are multiplying in many places (Cohen et al., 2000; Horn, 2002; Lund and Skinner, 1999). At the same time, dual sex groups are also increasing in number. The extent to which women participate in the leadership and exercise influence within such associations is therefore a pertinent question (Lindell, forthcoming b; Lund and Skinner, 1999:33; Prag, this collection). A related development of significance is the visible growth in the participation of men in the informal economy, in a context of large-scale retrenchments and declining access to wage jobs. In some places – as in the cases in West Africa discussed by Clark and Prag in this collection – men appear to be penetrating economic spheres and niches that used to be dominated by women, changing pre-existing gender boundaries. Furthermore, women are not only facing economic competition from men. As Prag reports, men are also creating unions that both tend to marginalise women from leadership positions and compete with women’s associations – although women also devise strategies to deal with these developments.

HISTORICALLY INFORMED ORGANIZING AND CONTEMPORARY CHANGE

Some organizing forms in the informal economy, rather than being recent creations in response to contemporary economic and political processes, are informed by a long historical past. This relates to the deep historical roots of informal economies in many settings and long existing locally specific forms of social and economic organization within them (Lourenço-Lindell, 2002; Roitman, 1990). The resilience of such forms is particularly evident in many areas in Africa. Historically evolved cultures, social relations and forms of belonging are certainly of importance for understanding the contemporary politics of informality in Africa. Firstly, they inform some of the divisions, power hierarchies, patterns of differentiation and of advantage and disadvantage visible in today’s informal economies. As suggested below, such divisions, boundaries and hierarchies are not fixed. They respond to wider societal processes,

⁶ Personal communication by Pat Horn, Coordinator of Streetnet International, 2006.

they have to be actively maintained and are not necessarily uncontested. Secondly, such cultural norms and identities inform certain forms of collaboration and association in the informal economy. These may take a wide range of shapes that are specific to particular places. Such forms range from networks and associations structured around ethnic, religious, and kinship related identities to 'traditional' worker gangs integrated into the contemporary practices of labour agencies for the recruitment of casual labour, as reported by Boamong in this collection. Several of the contributions here address such forms of organizing and their historical and cultural embeddedness – see in particular the chapters by Brown and Lyons, Meagher, Boamong, Prag and Scheld, as well as Clark's historical analysis of political dynamics. A relevant question pertains to how such historically evolved forms of organizing are changing in the contemporary context.

There is much evidence and awareness that historical socio-cultural practices and senses of belonging are currently being revived and reinvented in Africa (Bangura, 1994; Rakodi, 1997:566-7). The revalorisation of 'indigenous cultures' in public discourse and the political manipulation of ethnicity in the context of multiparty politics are often mentioned as driving forces. 'Traditional' practices are also being preserved and reinvented for a variety of other purposes. While for many, they represent a means of withstanding the economic crisis, for others, they are a vehicle for accumulating wealth (Bangura, 1994:821; Lourenço-Lindell, 2002; Rakodi, 1997:585). These trends are exceedingly evident in African informal economies (Meagher, 1995; Roitman, 1990). The proliferation of ethnic and religion-based associations in the informal economy for example is well documented. Some of these associations and networks seem to have revived and thrived in the context of economic liberalisation and in some countries they command the growth sectors of the domestic economy (Lourenço-Lindell, 2002; Meagher, 1995). Some are also active in large-scale import-export activities and are part of dense international connections, both within and beyond the continent (Diouf, 2000). At the same time, these networks often make extensive use of informal contracts and 'unregulated' work. Hierarchical in structure, they provide the conditions for the control of labour (Lourenço-Lindell, 2002; Meagher, 1995). Their economic success is also related to extensive political networking and leaders at their apex often command considerable political influence (Roitman, 1990; Brown and Lyons, this volume). These well-resourced networks and associations that work as an infrastructure for accumulation are in stark contrast to other ethnic associations that are being debilitated by contemporary developments (Meagher, this collection).

In parts of West Africa, where women have long traditions in trading, they have through time developed elaborate networks and structures that make use of kinship, religious or ethnic identities. Religious associations such as brotherhoods in Senegal support women traders and facilitate their mobility in connection with trade (Rosander, 1997). Hierarchical networks and associations among market women in Ghana and Benin continue to regulate relations in the markets and to provide traders with a number of important services (Prag, Clark and Brown and Lyons in this collection). While these networks and associations may appear on the surface to be mainly concerned with the smooth operation of businesses, they often become extremely politicised and their leaders are sometimes able to exercise political influence.

Networks that draw on ethnic and religious identities are often quite exclusionary in character and maintain tightly drawn boundaries, while at the same time the most profitable networks represent one of the few avenues for social mobility in some countries. For example, as Brown and Lyons (in this collection) indicate, Muslim brotherhoods in Senegal refuse entry to migrants and youth. But while such 'particularistic' forms of organizing have displayed great

resilience and survived through shifting political and economic regimes (Clark, this volume), they are not necessarily immune to - nor passive in the face of - contemporary challenges. Among others, the growing number of Chinese entrepreneurs in local informal economies is posing serious economic competition and perhaps even unsettling power structures in vertical networks (see chapters by Scheld, Prag, and Brown and Lyons). More generally, at a time when economic survival necessitates an intensified mobility within and between countries and armed conflicts increase the numbers of refugees crossing national borders, ethnic-regional and socio-cultural competition is reportedly increasing and is often accompanied by manifestations of xenophobia (Olukoshi, 2005; Nyamnjoh, 2006). Such manifestations are also evident in the informal economy in some contexts and sometimes find collectively organized expression (Amis, 2004; Scheld, this collection). Local reactions to the increasing presence of Chinese entrepreneurs is only the latest addition to a series of boundaries that have been drawn and re-drawn through time between ‘insiders’ and ‘outsiders’ in the informal economy – in this case, on the basis of race (see for further discussion Lindell, forthcoming a).

In contrast, other forms of association cut across a great variety of boundaries and gather individuals from very different cultural and social backgrounds and in some cases from different countries. The regional association of cross-border traders described by Hansen and Nchito in this volume, for example, functions as a network that facilitates for foreign members to operate in local markets and fosters tolerance between members from different countries. On a larger scale, the global networks of organized informal workers also attempt to build identities that are inclusive rather than particularistic. Close relations are also developing where they have least been expected, as for example between people in the informal economy and trade unions.

ORGANIZING ACROSS THE FORMAL-INFORMAL ‘DIVIDE’

A different set of actors is contributing to the increasingly diverse landscape of organized initiatives in the informal economy. These are trade unions that in many countries are developing an interest in organizing ‘informal workers’. This development ought to be understood in the context of the decline in membership that trade unions are experiencing in many parts of the world in the context of global economic change and labour market deregulation (Gallin, 2001; Bieler et al., 2008). The intensified informalization and casualization of work that have accompanied these processes have resulted in growing numbers of people making a living outside the state regulated wage sector, where trade unions have their main constituencies. In the face of these harsh realities, some trade unions have adopted new strategies, intended to halt membership losses and to retain influence or more generally aimed at ‘trade union renewal’. In some countries, trade unions have been able to align their struggles with those of a new generation of popular mobilisations (Lindberg and Sverrisson, 1997; Soane et al., 2005). It is in this context that trade unions in some places increasingly attempt to reach out to informal ‘workers’ (Gallin, 2001; Horn, 2005; Lindell, 2008b; Labour Education, 1999/3; and contributions by Andrae and Beckman, Jimu, Lier and Boampong in this collection).

This collection critically assesses current experiences of organizing across the formal-informal ‘divide’ especially in the African context. When looking at such experiences, however, it is important to avoid an all too common fallacy that transpires in a share of the existing literature touching upon these issues. This pertains to the entrenched perception of organizing as an exclusive capacity of the ‘working class’ (i.e. wage workers in formal employment), whereby other categories of workers (the self-employed, casual workers etc)

are deemed incapable of self-organizing. Organizing the ‘unorganized’ then becomes the mission of trade unions (see for example Moody, 2005). While trade unions may have a role to play, the danger implied in such a view is that people in the informal economy may be seen as passive targets awaiting the rescuing hand of trade unions. Alternatively – and as we repeatedly insist in this introduction – we should look upon people in the informal economy as *actors*, capable of various initiatives, including organizing themselves, despite the many obstacles they often face. Attempts at organizing across the formal-informal ‘divide’ should then be assessed not merely from the vantage point of ‘trade union renewal’ but also from the perspective of informal actors. The latter, just like trade unions, have their own reasons to engage in, disengage from or avoid close relationships with trade unions.

There are great variations between and within countries regarding the extent and nature of trade unions’ involvement in the informal economy (Lindell, 2008b). In some cases, trade unions directly recruit ‘informal workers’ into their membership ranks, while in other cases they establish relationships with already existing self-organized initiatives in the informal economy, as contributions in this collection document. But the current rapprochement between trade unions on the one hand and informals and their organizations on the other raises a range of issues that have been scarcely reflected upon. Firstly, one may consider whether the different interests can be bridged and ‘unity’ be fostered (for further discussion see Lindell, forthcoming a). Secondly, where trade unions extend their membership to ‘informal workers’, the question can be raised as to whether they can adequately represent the interests of these ‘workers’. These are relevant questions, considering the great diversity of work situations, the myriad types of employment relationships and the various types of constraints experienced by people in the informal economy. Furthermore, where trade unions encounter self-organizing initiatives in the informal economy, it is pertinent to look into how they relate to such initiatives and the opportunities as well as tensions that may eventually emerge from such an encounter.

Vulnerable groups in the informal economy may be in need of strong allies, particularly considering that their organizations often struggle with lack of recognition and political clout. Trade unions are emerging in several contexts across Sub-Saharan Africa and beyond as one such ally – albeit not necessarily the only one. In some instances, trade unions seem to provide informals and their organizations with a platform for dialogue with other relevant actors and for widening their arenas of influence (Lindell, 2008b; Boampong and Lier in this volume). To the extent that such ‘alliances’ are already happening, it is worth investigating how they are being constructed in practice and the eventual benefits for both trade unions and informal workers. The chapters in Part Three inquire into the opportunities, challenges and problems involved in establishing such ‘alliances’.

INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZING

The politics of informal economies involve processes and action at wider international and global scales. Contemporary informal economies, rather than being local, indigenous or vernacular as was once believed, are extensively internationalised and are so in multiple ways. On the one hand, informal livelihood conditions and opportunities are deeply embedded in global processes. To be sure, this embeddedness is not new in itself, but rather represents a new chapter in a longer history of internationalisation, evidencing considerable continuity (see Scheld, and Hansen and Nchito in this collection; see also chapters by Clark and Prag). But certain contemporary processes of global change are impacting on local livelihoods in new ways (as discussed below). At the same time, such processes may also trigger organized responses that reach beyond national borders.

Many analyses connect contemporary informalization with processes of economic ‘globalization’. In contrast, however, the politics of informals is most often described as confined to the local level (see for example Cross, 2007; and Tripp, 1997). Alternatively, informals are seen as mere victims at the receiving end of global processes. The perspective that we adopt here differs from these conceptions. Firstly, while certainly experiencing the pressures and challenges posed by global forces, people in the informal economy are *active agents* rather than passive victims in the face of these forces and sometimes organize collectively in response to them. Secondly, while some of these organized responses take place at the local/national level, informal actors increasingly organize internationally, becoming international actors in their own right (Lindell, 2009). Today, the (collective) agency of informal actors can no longer be said to be bounded to the local arena or consigned to one particular scale. Rather, their politics appears to include widening scales of collective engagement.

This trend is occurring in the context of the wider contemporary internationalisation of social movements and civil societies. While many global movements are initiated in the North, a variety of popular movements in the South are also transnationalizing, and many of them are focused around livelihood issues (Lindberg and Sverrisson, 1997:1-5; Soane et al., 2005). Informal economy organisations are also scaling up, by building federated bodies and networks that transcend national borders. Some are regional coalitions, such as the recently formed network of *Sindicatos de la Economía Informal de Centro America y Panama*⁷. Others are transcontinental in reach. One example is StreetNet International, an international network of membership-based organisations engaged in the organizing of vendors, which has some thirty member organizations in Africa, Latin America and Asia. Another example is *Women in Informal Employment: Globalizing and Organizing*, an international activist, research and policy network, whose members include organizations of informal ‘workers’. One can also discern the emergence of a network of international actors – including various regional and international network, global union federations etc – with ‘informal work’ issues as their core concern (Gallin, 2004), engaging in dialogue and concerted campaigns. Such networks are also facilitating the internationalization of discourses about ‘informal work’, that was previously mentioned.

These developments prompt the investigation of the rationales that are motivating groups in the informal economy to organize internationally and of the concerns that they articulate. Indeed, international organizing by such groups can be driven by a great variety of motivations as well as forces. The collection illustrates only a few of these. Firstly, changes in international political relations may set in motion processes that impact on the dynamics of local informal economies. The current intensification of the relations between African countries and China is a good example (Alves and Draper, 2006; Wild and Mephram, 2006). The penetration of Chinese people and goods into Africa is in some places altering the local constellation of actors, closing and opening livelihood opportunities for different groups, as well as disturbing some social hierarchies in local informal economies (see particularly Scheld, but also Prag, and Brown and Lyons, in this collection). These processes raise important questions: What new tensions have emerged and what organized responses have they given rise to? How do different organized interests position themselves on this issue? And what use do they make of international linkages as they attempt to influence such local contests?

⁷ ‘Latin America: New Regional Network to Strengthen Organisation of Informal Economy Unions’. <http://www.streetnet.org.za/english/Latam9.htm> (accessed 30 October 2007).

Secondly, the ‘global era’ is also marked by the rise to prominence of supranational governance institutions⁸. These are often prime drivers of economic liberalization and of the expansion of the free-market, and some are involved in the production of international regulatory regimes with an impact on informal livelihoods. These institutions have contributed to turning informal economies into major distribution ‘channels’ of international commodities, to increasing the exposure of informal workers to global market forces, as well as to opening opportunities for certain groups to internationalize their economic activities. While most analyses see the politics of informality in terms of relations with the state, it is just as relevant to investigate how informal economy organizations relate to such supranational governance institutions (see for example Hansen and Nchito, this collection). Thirdly, groups in the informal economy may organize internationally primarily to address power relations in the local/national scene (Lindell, 2009; see also Mitullah in this collection). This is not very surprising – even if it represents a new trend in Africa - if we consider that informal economies are shaped by both global and local forces. A crucial question to be addressed then is whether international organizing makes a difference for the leverage of informal economy groups at the local/national level. In particular, it is of value to assess how it assists vulnerable groups in the local struggles in which they are often engaged.

COMPLEX LANDSCAPES OF ACTORS AND THE POLITICS OF INFORMALITY

The above discussion of contemporary trends in collective organizing in the informal economy in Africa and beyond reveals a rapidly changing landscape of organizing initiatives and a highly dynamic associational environment, being shaped both by global processes and by local forces, histories and cultures. It brings to light a tendency towards a diversification of organized actors in the informal economy, resulting in complex associational landscapes – although the level of diversification and the particular constellations of actors will of course vary between different places. The previous sections discuss the diversity of organized actors involved and general axes of change that can be identified: the emergence of new organized actors using a rights discourse and articulating concerns for vulnerable groups; the growing number of groups representing the interests of the non-poor in the informal economy; the multiplying initiatives of trade unions; and the increasing collective engagement in international networks. Some of these changes reflect novel patterns in collective organizing. But pre-existing patterns, many of them with deep historical roots and often structured along lines of gender, age, ethnic, religious or racial belonging, etc are also being re-worked in the face of the present challenges. Contemporary processes at work in informal economies, including changes in social composition and economic differentiation, appear to be changing the patterns and dynamics of collective organizing.

While the growing complexity of associational landscapes in the informal economy follows more general trends visible in many civil societies in Africa and beyond, its significance lies in its implications for our understanding of the politics of informality. The widening range of organized actors means that the associational environment in the informal economy should be seen as a complex political field with many collective players, who may articulate different visions, rationales and interests. The way these different collective actors relate to each other is an important dimension of this politics – they may ally, compete or work against each other. These highly diverse actors may relate to relevant centres of power in very different ways. These centres include state institutions, but also ‘sovereignties’ and loci of power located beyond the administrative reach or the territorial confines of the state. The analysis of

⁸ Such institutions include not only international financial institutions but also regional and international organisations regulating international economic exchanges.

the contemporary politics of informality thus requires a conceptual framework that takes account of the wide range of organized interests that exist today, of the various actors and governing powers that they may engage with, and of the various scales of social struggle in which informal actors may participate (for conceptual discussions, see Lindell, forthcoming a).

This collection does not claim to address the many sides and dimensions of this broad and complex political field. Rather, the contributions highlight certain aspects of this complexity, focusing on the particular areas of concern that were outlined in the introduction of this chapter, in short: the relations between organized informal actors and dominating power – where the state emerges from the contributions as an important actor, albeit not the only one; their emerging relations with trade unions, to be seen as one among a wider range of possible relations between various organizing initiatives; and the international dimensions of organizing. These correspond to the key concerns of the forthcoming collection.

REFERENCES

- Adu-Amankwah, K. (1999) 'Ghana', *Labour Education* 1999/3, Number 116, pp. 1-14.
- Aina, T. (1997) 'The State and Civil Society: Politics, Government and Social Organisation in African Cities', in C. Rakodi (ed.) *The Urban Challenge in Africa*, pp. Xx. Tokyo, New York and Paris: United Nations University Press.
- Alsayyad, N. (2004) 'Urban Informality as a "New" Way of Life', in A. Roy and N. Alsayyad (eds) *Urban Informality: Transnational Perspectives from the Middle East, Latin America, and South Asia*, pp. 7-30. Lanham, Boulder, New York, Toronto and Oxford: Lexington Books.
- Alves, P. and P. Draper (2006) 'Introduction: China's Growing Role in Africa', in G. le Pere (ed.) *China in Africa: Mercantilist Predator or Partner in Development?*, pp. 10-30. Midrand: The Institute for Global Dialogue; Johannesburg: The South African Institute of International Affairs.
- Amis, P. (2004) 'Regulating the Informal Sector: Voice and Bad Governance', in N. Devas (ed.) *Urban Governance, Voice and Poverty in the Developing World*, pp.145-163. London: Earthscan.
- Ballard, R. (2005) 'Social Movements in Post-Apartheid South Africa: An Introduction', in P. Jones and K. Stokke (eds), *Democratising Development: The Politics of Socio-Economic Rights in South Africa*, pp. 77-100. Leiden and Boston: Martinus Nijhoff Publishers.
- Ballard, R.; A. Habib; I. Valodia and E. Zuern (2006) 'From Anti-Apartheid to Post-Apartheid Social Movements', in R. Ballard; A. Habib and I. Valodia (eds) *Voices of Protest: Social Movements in Post-Apartheid South Africa*, pp. 1-22. Scottsville: University of KwaZulu-Natal Press.
- Bangura, Y. (1994) 'Economic Restructuring, Coping Strategies and Social Change: Implications for Institutional Development in Africa', *Development and Change* 24(4): 785-827.

Bayat, A. (2004) 'Globalization and the Politics of the Informals in the Global South', in A. Roy and N. Alsayyad (eds) *Urban Informality: Transnational Perspectives from the Middle East, Latin America, and South Asia*, pp. 79-102. Lanham, Boulder, New York, Toronto and Oxford: Lexington Books.

Bieler, A.; I. Lindberg; and D. Pillay (2008) 'The Future of the Global Working Class: An Introduction', in Bieler, A.; I. Lindberg; and D. Pillay (eds) *Labour and the Challenges of Globalization: What Prospects for Transnational Solidarity*, pp. xx. London: Pluto Press.

Boron, A. and G. Lechini (2005) 'Introduction', in Boron, A. and G. Lechini (eds), *Politics and Social Movements in a Hegemonic World: Lessons from Africa, Asia and Latin America*, pp. 11-34. Buenos Aires: CLACSO.

Brown, A. (ed.) (2006) *Contested Space: Street Trading, Public Space, and Livelihoods in Developing Cities*. Warwickshire: ITDG Publishing.

Bryceson, D. (2006) 'African Urban Economies: Searching for Sources of Sustainability', in D. Bryceson and D. Potts (eds) *African Urban Economies: Viability, Vitality or Vitiation?*, pp. 39-66. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Carr, M. and M. Chen (2004) 'Globalization, Social Exclusion and Work: With Special Reference to Informal Employment and Gender'. Working Paper No. 20. Geneva: ILO.

Castells, M. and A. Portes (1989) 'World Underneath: The Origins, Dynamics and Effects of the Informal Economy', in A. Portes, A.; M. Castells and L. Benton (eds) *The Informal Economy: Studies in Advanced and Less Developed Countries*, pp. 1-37. London: The John Hopkins Press.

Chen, M.; R. Jhablava; F. Lund (2002) 'Supporting Workers in the Informal Economy: A Policy Framework', Working Paper on the Informal Economy. Geneva: ILO.
<http://www.wiego.org> (accessed 15 November 2007).

Cohen, M; M. Bhatt and P. Horn (2000) 'Women Street Vendors: The Road to Recognition'. Seeds 20. New York: The Population Council.

Cross, J. (1998) *Informal Politics: Street Vendors and the State in Mexico City*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.

Cross, J. (2007) 'Pirates on the High Streets: The Street as a Site of Local Resistance to Globalization', in J. Cross and A. Morales (eds) *Street Entrepreneurs: People, Place and Politics in Local and Global Perspective*, pp. 125-143. London and New York: Routledge.

Cross, J. and A. Morales (2007) 'Introduction: Locating Street Markets in the Modern/Postmodern World', in J. Cross and A. Morales (eds) *Street Entrepreneurs: People, Place and Politics in Local and Global Perspective*, pp. 125-143. London and New York: Routledge.

Diouf, M. (2000) 'The Senegalese Mourid Trade Diaspora and the Making of a Vernacular Cosmopolitanism', *CODESRIA Bulletin* 1: 19-30.

- Gallin, D. (2001) 'Propositions on Trade Unions and Informal Employment in Times of Globalisation', *Antipode* 33(3): 531-549.
- Gallin, D. (2004) 'Organizing in the Global Informal Economy'. A paper presented at the Social Policy Forum: The Changing Role of Unions in the Contemporary World of Labour, Istanbul (26-27 November). www.global-labour.org (accessed 17/10/2007).
- Garretón, M. (1997) 'Social Movements and Democratization', in S. Lindberg and S. Sverrisson (eds) *Social Movements in Development: The Challenge of Globalization and Democratization*, pp. 67-78. London and New York: MacMillan Press.
- Hansen, K. (2004) 'Who Rules the Streets? The Politics of Vending Space in Lusaka', in K. Hansen and M. Vaa (eds) *Reconsidering Informality: Perspectives from Urban Africa*, pp. 62-80. Uppsala: The Nordic Africa Institute.
- Hansen, K. and M. Vaa (2004) 'Introduction', in K. Hansen and M. Vaa (eds) *Reconsidering Informality: Perspectives from Urban Africa*, pp. 7-24. Uppsala: The Nordic Africa Institute.
- Horn, P. (2002) 'The Realities, the Organizing Strategies, and the Policy Priorities of Street Vendors and their Organization'. Paper presented at the Conference 'Rethinking Labor Market Informalization', Cornell University (18-19 October).
- Horn, P. (2005) 'Unions Targeting the Unorganised', *South African Labour Bulletin* 29(3): 25-26.
- ILO (2002) 'Decent Work and the Informal Economy'. International Labour Conference, 90th session, 2002. Geneva: ILO.
- ILO (2002a) 'Resolution Concerning Decent Work and the Informal Economy'. Geneva: ILO.
- Labour Education 1999/3, *Trade Unions in the Informal Sector: Finding their Bearings*. Number 116. Geneva: ILO.
- Lindberg, S. and S. Sverrisson (1997) 'Introduction' in S. Lindberg and S. Sverrisson (eds) *Social Movements in Development: The Challenge of Globalization and Democratization*, pp. 1-21. London and New York: MacMillan Press.
- Lindell, I. (forthcoming a): 'The complex politics of informality: collective subjectivities, multiple relations and scales of engagement'. (manuscript under consideration).
- Lindell, I. (forthcoming b): 'The transnational activism of informal workers: networks, boundaries, mediation and a different politics of scale'. (manuscript under consideration).
- Lindell, I. (2008a) 'The Multiple Sites of Urban Governance: Insights from an African City', *Urban Studies* 45(10).
- Lindell, I. (2008b) Building alliances between formal and informal workers: Experiences from Africa, in: A. Bieler, I. Lindberg and D. Pillay (eds) *Labour and the challenge of globalization: What prospects for transnational solidarity?*, pp. xx. London: Pluto Press.

Lindell, I. (2009) 'Glocal' movements: place struggles and transnational organizing by informal workers', *Geografiska Annaler*, XX (2).

Lindell, I. and A. Kamete (2007) 'The Politics of 'Non-Planning' Strategies in African Cities: International and Local Dimensions'. Uppsala: The Nordic Africa Institute.

Lourenço-Lindell, I. (2002) *Walking the Tight Rope: Informal Livelihoods and Social Networks in a West African City*. Stockholm Studies in Human Geography 9. Stockholm: Acta Universitatis Stockholmiensis.

Lund, F. and C. Skinner (1999) 'Promoting the Interests of Women Street Traders: An analysis of Street Trader Organisations in South Africa'. CSDS Research Report 19. Durban: University of Natal.

Meagher, K. (1995) 'Crisis, Informalisation and the Urban Informal Sector in Sub-Saharan Africa', *Development and Change* 26(2): 259-284.

Mitlin, D. (2004) 'Civil Society Organisations: Do They Make a Difference to Urban Poverty?', in N. Devas (ed.) *Urban Governance, Voice and Poverty in the Developing World*, pp. 123-144. London: Earthscan.

Mitullah, W. (2003) 'Street Vending in African Cities: A Synthesis of Empirical Findings from Kenya, Ghana, Zimbabwe, Uganda and South Africa'. www.wiego.org (accessed 12 November 2007).

Moody, K. (2005) 'Toward an International Social-Movement Unionism', in L. Amoore (ed.) *The Global Resistance Reader*, pp. 257-272. London and New York: Routledge.

Njamnjoh, F. (2006) *Insiders and Outsiders: Citizenship and Xenophobia in Contemporary Southern Africa*. London, New York and Dakar: Zed Books and CODESRIA.

Olukoshi, A. (2005) 'Changing Patterns of Politics in Africa', in Boron, A. and G. Lechini (eds), *Politics and Social Movements in a Hegemonic World: Lessons from Africa, Asia and Latin America*, pp. 177-202. Buenos Aires: CLACSO.

Oommen, T. (1997) 'Social Movements in the Third World', in S. Lindberg and S. Sverrisson (eds) *Social Movements in Development: The Challenge of Globalization and Democratization*, pp. 46-66. London and New York: MacMillan Press.

Rakodi, C. (1997) 'Conclusion', in C. Rakodi (ed.) *The Urban Challenge in Africa*, pp. xx. Tokyo, New York and Paris: United Nations University Press.

Rakodi, C. and T. Lloyd-Jones (eds), (2002) *Urban Livelihoods: A People-Centred Approach to Reducing Poverty*. London: Earthscan.

Roever, S. (2006) Street Trade in Latin America: Demographic Trends, Legal Issues and Vending Organizations in Six Cities. Paper prepared for WIEGO Urban Policies Programme. www.streetnet.org.za accessed 23/11/2007.

- Roitman, J. (1990) 'The Politics of Informal Markets in Sub-Saharan Africa', *The Journal of Modern African Studies* 28(4): 671-696.
- Rosander, E. (1997) 'Introduction', in E. Rosander (ed.) *Transforming Female Identities: Women's Organizational Forms in West Africa*, pp. 13-31. Uppsala: The Nordic Africa Institute.
- Roy, A. and N. Alsayyad (eds) (2004) *Urban Informality: Transnational Perspectives from the Middle East, Latin America, and South Asia*. Lanham, Boulder, New York, Toronto and Oxford: Lexington Books.
- Roy, A. (2004) 'The Gentlemen's City: Urban Informality in the Calcutta of New Communism', in A. Roy and N. Alsayyad (eds) *Urban Informality: Transnational Perspectives from the Middle East, Latin America, and South Asia*, pp. 289-317. Lanham, Boulder, New York, Toronto and Oxford: Lexington Books.
- Scott, J. (1985) *Weapons of the Weak: Everyday Forms of Peasant Resistance*. New Haven: Yale University Press.
- Setšabi, S. (2006) 'Contest and Conflict: Governance and Street Livelihoods in Maseru, Lesotho', in A. Brown (ed.), *Contested Space: Street Trading, Public Space, and Livelihoods in Developing Cities*, pp. 131-152. Warwickshire: ITDG Publishing.
- Soane, J; E. Taddei and C. Algranati (2005) 'The New Configurations of Popular Movements in Latin America', in Boron, A. and G. Lechini (eds), *Politics and Social Movements in an Hegemonic World: Lessons from Africa, Asia and Latin America*, pp. 221-244. Buenos Aires: CLACSO.
- Tostensen, A.; I. Tvedten and M. Vaa (2001) The urban crisis, governance and associational life, in: A. Tostensen, I. Tvedten and M. Vaa (eds) *Associational Life in African Cities: Popular Responses to the Urban Crisis*, pp. 7-26. Uppsala: The Nordic Africa Institute.
- Tripp, A. (1997) *Changing the Rules: The Politics of Liberalisation and the Urban Informal Economy in Tanzania*. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press.
- War on Want, Alliance for Zambia Informal Economy Associations, and Workers Education Association of Zambia (2006) *Forces for Change: Informal Economy Organisations in Africa*. London: War on Want.
- WIEGO (n.d.) 'Rights, Voice, Protection and Opportunities: A Policy Response to the Informal Economy'. www.wiego.org (accessed 12/11/2007).
- WIEGO (2002) 'Women in Informal Employment: Globalizing and Organizing. Third General Meeting'. Ahmedabad (19-21 January).
- Wild, L. and D. Mephram (eds) (2006) *The New Sinosphere: China in Africa*. London: Institute for Public Policy Research.

