THE CHALLENGE OF HOUSING THE POOR

STAKEHOLDERS, POLITICS AND KNOWLEDGE USE IN DECISION-MAKING PROCESSES FOR THE N2 GATEWAY HOUSING PROJECT IN CAPE TOWN

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ABSTRACT:

A recent debate on urban governance has suggested that there is a shift away from governments as the dominant locus of power in the contemporary neoliberal society, to one in which various actors participate in hybrid governance arrangements. At the same time, increasing attention is paid to the potential contribution of involving different types of knowledge in governance processes, assumed to lead to more inclusive decision-making. This raises questions on what types of knowledge are recognized by various actors, and whose knowledge is prioritized in processes of urban governance. This paper examines how several types of knowledge are negotiated to provide strategic inputs in decision-making processes in the mega housing project N2 Gateway in Cape Town. It analyses the implementation of this mega-project in order to gain insight in the significance of including a variety of knowledge types to improve the quality of decisions taken. In the case of the N2 Gateway Project, political pressure has limited the use of technical, economic and community based knowledge in the planning phase of the project. This lack of knowledge inclusion had significant effects in the implementation of integrated settlements, a lack of matching housing supply and demand, the financial viability of the project and representation struggles in local project management.

KEY WORDS

Urban governance, mega-projects, housing, participation, knowledge, South Africa
INTRODUCTION

In the 1980s, a shift to entrepreneurial urban governance emerged as governments increasingly adopted growth-oriented approaches to urban policy and development (Harvey, 1989). Large cities were seen as driving forces behind economic growth and placed at the centre of economic strategies (Kennedy et al., 2011). In developing countries, this approach often combined with redistribution policies directed towards marginalized groups (Sutherland et al., 2011). This tension between pro-growth and pro-poor agendas is intense in South Africa, given the country’s history of apartheid and its continuing social inequalities (Sutherland et al., 2011). After the end of apartheid, South African governments followed a neoliberal approach for economic growth and a redistributive strategy to reduce income disparities (Ncube et al., 2012).

Large-scale housing projects reflect this pro-growth/pro-poor agenda, as they constitute both mega-projects in themselves and also address the need to reduce social inequalities through housing provision in South Africa. Mega-housing projects emerged as a new approach in the “Breaking New Ground” (BNG) plan launched in 2004 to address housing backlogs in the country (Sutherland et al., 2011). The BNG plan is however not only dedicated to programmes for inclusionary housing, but also enables municipalities to plan in situ upgrading of informal settlements. Furthermore, the programme makes specific provisions for community empowerment and participatory layout planning (Huchzermeyer, 2011).

The participatory dimension of the BNG fits into a more recent debate on urban governance, which argues that there is a shift away from national governments as the dominant locus of power in contemporary neoliberal society, to governance networks including various actors at different scale levels (Baud et al., 2011; Barnett & Scott, 2007). Policy-making is increasingly taking place through such networks and hybrid arrangements including not only the state, but also NGOs, the private sector, scientists and civil society (Mathur, 2011).

The idea of urban governance networks implicitly suggests that they provide more space for participatory inputs from these various actors, including their specific types of knowledge for decision-making processes (Baud et al., 2011). However, striking power differences remain between actors in such hybrid arrangements, even when labelled participatory (Mathur, 2011). Contested spaces like large-scale housing projects often reflect such unequal power relations between actors. These power relations, in turn, are reflected in the ways different types of knowledge are recognized and used in implementing such projects.

The social construction of knowledge is an important but unruly process in networks, because actors are often not sure of their positions in hybrid decision-making and in what arenas engagement will take place (Baud et al., 2011). Varieties of knowledge are adopted by different actors to make sense of their own experiences (van Ewijk and Baud 2009). Within processes of urban development, this raises questions on which types of knowledge are recognized, and whose knowledge is prioritized and negotiated to resolve the issues concerned.

This paper examines how different forms of knowledge are constructed, valued and contested to provide strategic inputs into the socio-political processes embedded in urban governance.
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arrangements. More specifically, it will look at how power relations have influenced the types of knowledge used in decision-making processes for the implementation of a mega-housing project in Cape Town, South Africa. The N2 Gateway Housing Project is a pilot project of the BNG plan, and was chosen as case study because it not only reflects the pro-growth/pro-poor agenda of the South African government, but may also reflect the shift towards hybrid governance arrangements through participatory approaches prescribed in the BNG when implementing such projects. The question is raised to what extent spaces are created for including less recognized varieties of knowledge, such as community-based knowledge as compared to expert knowledge more generally accepted in large projects.

This research is part of the international research program Chance2Sustain, coordinated by the European Association of Development Research and Training Institutes (EADI), focusing on the role of participatory spatial knowledge management in urban development. This paper is based on a fieldwork period of three months in Cape Town, where 34 in-depth interviews with stakeholders of the N2 Gateway Project and field visits provided the necessary material¹. The N2 Gateway Project is a lengthy, complicated project consisting of several phases, with each phase involving actors in different ways. Therefore, the focus on two distinctly different phases, namely project conception (the planning phase) and project implementation (Joe Slovo Phase 3), as the contrasts in these two phases would bring out clearly how the project was envisaged initially, and how decision-making in practice changed during implementation.

URBAN GOVERNANCE, MEGA-PROJECTS AND KNOWLEDGE

The concept of urban governance has received increasing attention since the 1990s in the discourse of international development organizations on the one hand, and in political science studies on the other (Beall & Fox, 2009; Pierre and Peters, 2000). One of the most cited definitions is from the United Nations Development Programme:

“Governance can be seen as the exercise of economic, political and administrative authority to manage a country’s affairs at all levels. It comprises the mechanisms, processes and institutions, through which citizens and groups articulate their interests, exercise their legal rights, meet their obligations and mediate their differences.” (UNDP, 1997, p. 2-3)

The fuzziness of the concept is not surprising, as its implicit ambiguity lies in that it is both descriptive and prescriptive (Chandoke, 2003). Although not without problems, the concept is useful in recognizing the involvement of different actors in decision-making, including informal actors and institutions (Kennedy et al., 2011).

Two main models of urban governance can be distinguished. The first is the ‘urban management’ model, prevalent from the 1920s until the 1970s, the second the ‘urban network governance’ model emerging in the 1980s (Painter, 1994). The two models basically mark a shift in the role of local

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governments from direct providers of public services, to a role as regulator and enabler, providing the regulatory environment in which the private sector would be direct providers, and households and communities could meet their own needs (World Bank, 1991). The two urban governance models thus describe the relationship between state intervention and societal autonomy. While the first entails a strong state, in which local government coordinates and governs through hierarchical bureaucratic power, the latter describes a much flatter and essentially self-organizing network of societal actors, with state and non-state actors governing through power distributed in networks often based on implicit, informal or flexible arrangements (Painter, 1994; Jordan, 2008). Recent debates centre on the idea of ‘hybrid’ arrangements in governance networks. These hybrid arrangements also imply that a variety of actors participate in governance processes, but suggests that these actors are not only structured in ‘flat’ networks but are linked across scale levels, with varying degrees of power and participation (see McCann & Ward, 2011).

The concept of urban governance also provides a useful framework as it highlights the involvement of different actors and the power struggles between these groups of interests within cities (Kennedy et al., 2011). While dominant models tend to assume a generic, universal process of urban development shaped by global economic processes, Kennedy et al. (2011) believe that the diversity of paths in urban development suggests that local conditions and local political agency also play a role (Kennedy et al., 2011; McCann and Ward 2011).

Mega-projects are often linked with top-down, expert-driven models of urban governance (Kennedy et al., 2011). Altshuler & Luberoff (2003) argue that mega-project development is an expression of public authority, as public sector leadership is in most cases required for their effective implementation. At the same time, such projects are often a product of exceptionalist planning policies and procedures, “characterised by less democratic and more elite driven priorities” (Swyngedouw et al., 2002: 195). Usually, the rationales given for developing mega-projects are to create employment, attract foreign investment and improve the international branding of a city. Accelerated globalization processes have triggered both national and local governments to engage in economic restructuring for greater competitiveness in the global economy. Cities are increasingly promoted as strategic places for economic adjustment, in what Harvey (1989) has called the shift to urban entrepreneurialism. This implies that capitalist reproduction is moving from national to sub-national scales; but with direct connections to international production and trade chains. Such links have been described as glocal states (Swyngedouw, 1996) and glocal fixes (Brenner, 1998), in referring to the specific ways states attempt to attract capital through space-based interventions in urban regions.

Mega-projects are seen as classic examples of these glocal fixes, as cities increasingly centre in economic growth strategies in which mega-projects play an integral part. Although governments assert that they produce prosperity for all citizens, their processes of decision-making are less democratic and do not provide for accountability mechanisms. Flyvbjerg et al. (2003) argue that citizens are typically kept at a substantial distance from decision-making with regard to mega-projects. Stakeholders are typically unequally involved (Kennedy et al., 2011). A key problem identified in mega-project implementation is the lack of accountability, as clear objectives are often absent and implementation is frequently done through specialized agencies isolated from regular political processes (Altshuler & Luberoff, 2003). Thus, implementing mega-projects is a politically contested process.
Although mega-projects are developed for achieving economic growth, mega-projects strongly influence the future of cities through changes in land use or the dislocation of large groups of people (Kennedy et al., 2011). Thus, it often entails threats to some interests and values, while benefiting others. Hajer (2005) has argued that it is therefore useful to look at the discourses adopted by actors involved in mega-projects in order to understand the meanings such actors give to issues in decision-making.

URBAN REGIMES

The concept of urban regime provides an additional framework for understanding local decision-making in mega-projects. Literature on this concept aims to understand urban politics, agenda-setting and processes that explain the emergence of political choices (Kennedy et al., 2011). An assumption of the urban regime concept is that public officials and private interests often form a stable governing coalition which attempts to endure changes in the ruling party. Empirical studies have shown that business interests often dominate local politics because of these coalitions (Kennedy et al., 2011). This urban regime type is assumed to be dominant for several reasons. It has been argued that government officials and the private sector work together because of external economic constraints, such as inter-city competition; because the private sector is the most motivated to engage with city politics, as it has the most to gain from a growth agenda; and because politicians and the private sector are often ‘natural allies’ in sharing values and conceptions about desirable patterns for urban development in promoting a shared vision of city development (Kennedy et al., 2011). For other groups, such as ‘ordinary’ citizens, it is often harder to mobilize such support coalitions (Altshuler & Luberoff, 2003).

Given that mega-projects give expression to growth agendas, the urban regime concept is useful in understanding the politics of mega-project authorization and financing. Because large-scale projects are usually non-routine, they also require non-routine authorizing, funding and regulatory procedures by various levels of government. Stable and strong support is required to keep a mega-project going, which explains why public-private cooperation often plays an important role in the governance structure around mega-projects (Altshuler & Luberoff, 2003).

The definitions, models and attributes of urban governance and urban regimes will help to understand the governance context in which decision-making around the N2 Gateway Project has taken place and why certain knowledge has been used or excluded in decision-making. A theoretical overview on the concept of knowledge will first be provided before we turn to the analysis of the case study.

KNOWLEDGE PRODUCTION, USE AND CONTESTATION

No single definition of knowledge is generally accepted; although distinction is usually made between ‘knowledge’ and ‘information’. Information consists of data and facts, which can easily be transferred or shared. To build knowledge from information, context should be added (Hordijk & Baud, 2006). Context affects the value and meaning of knowledge, influenced by the perspectives of different actors. This implies that a variety of knowledge exists among different actors (Hordijk & Baud, 2006).

Two main analytical approaches exist to knowledge-building processes. The first is assumes that knowledge is built up in linear processes of experimentation, verification and codification -building scientific codified knowledge, (Gibbons et al., 1994). This model is criticized, as it assumes that knowledge constructed in this manner is universally applicable, and ignores context. The second approach to knowledge building distinguishes different types of knowledge and recognizes the
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construction of knowledge as a social process, in which various paradigms compete with each other (Gibbons et al., 1994; Baud et al., 2011). Within this approach, knowledge building is not only led by experts and scientists, but community-based knowledge building and working experience is seen as equally valid sources of knowledge (Van Ewijk & Baud, 2009). In their analysis of environmental issues, Bruckmeijer & Tovey (2008) show how knowledge processes are built through social institutions and power struggles between groups to have their definitions of problems recognized. In this way, knowledge building is embedded, based on processes of negotiation and conflict.

Van Ewijk & Baud (2009) identify different types of knowledge in their research on city-to-city cooperation programmes. They distinguish tacit, contextual-embedded and codified forms of knowledge, and the different ways in which they are embedded in social processes. Tacit knowledge is built through individual experience and often remains non-recognized. This type of knowledge can only be transferred from person to person. Contextual-embedded knowledge is also built through practice, but is socially recognized within specific groups. Van Ewijk & Baud (2009) distinguish three sub-types of contextual embedded knowledge: technical-economic-sectoral embedded knowledge spread mainly among professionals; community-based knowledge linked to local networks; and political knowledge embedded in political and social networks. They also identify codified knowledge, systematically expressed and codified through academic analysis and validated written documentation.

Baud et al. (2011) have summarized the different knowledge types and the main actors who produce them in the table below. This categorization was used for identifying knowledge types in the analysis.

[fig. 1] Types of knowledge (Baud et al., 2011, p. 8)

In urban planning, knowledge has a strong spatial dimension; knowledge is both linked to a specific locality, as well as referring to the production of space by actors involved in an urban development project. Any type of knowledge can become spatialized, as it is linked to the same geographic space through a mapping process, regardless of whether it consists of tacit or more codified forms of knowledge (Baud et al., 2011).

Knowledge use, exchange and contestation in decision-making are part of urban development processes. Critical theory postulates that knowledge is value-laden and represents different interests. Knowledge is filtered through the perspective of different actors, reflecting their context and understanding (Hjorth, 2003). Consequently, “research needs to reflect the variety of knowledge existing among actors involved in urban governance, and the conflicts in interpretation and valuation of knowledge sources” (Hordijk and Baud 2006: 669). This paper adopts this approach.

In terms of knowledge exchange, Hordijk and Baud (2006) indicate that knowledge tends to stay where it is generated. For instance, scientific research results often do not reach government officials but remain in academic circles, while local communities often do not get the opportunity to share their
experiences with policymakers. Building connections between researchers, policy makers, NGOs, CBOs and local communities can provide spaces that give more importance to using different types of knowledge in urban governance. Recent work on policy mobility suggests that knowledge travels more easily across scale levels and between different types of actors that thought earlier, although this needs to be examined more systematically across various contexts (McCann and Ward, 2011).

Knowledge contestation results from unequal valuation of different types of knowledge. In urban governance networks, various ‘communities of interest’ can make knowledge claims regarding urban development processes (Scott, 2011). There is a tendency in urban governance to focus on factual information rather than on contextual knowledge. Even in deliberative processes, expert scientific knowledge often has greater power and legitimacy (Scott & Barnett, 2009). Government officials and business actors use scientific knowledge strategically to claim authority and increase their influence in decision-making. They can exclude alternative types of knowledge, such as practice-based or traditional knowledge, by contesting the source of knowledge or invalidating arguments by questioning their legitimacy (Hordijk & Baud, 2006).

Nevertheless, increasing attention is given to how alternative types of knowledge from civil society and local communities can contribute to urban development processes. Rakodi (2003) has argued that locally produced knowledge can contribute to more realistic views and needs of targeted groups, making local governments more knowledgeable about local situations. Many authors argue involving citizens in governance processes should lead to better decision-making, better government and greater citizenship (Boulding & Wampler, 2010; Wampler, 2007; Cornwall & Coelho, 2007). Additionally, Hjorth (2003) argues that there is a need to combine different types of knowing and learning to enable cooperation between actors. Scott (2011) argues that including knowledge of citizens contributes to democratising knowledge production in urban decision-making processes and hence to a more inclusive city (Scott, 2011).

Despite the arguments put forward by various authors and experiences in practice, different types of knowledge are still valued unequally in governance processes. Even when multiple actors are included in urban decision-making processes, a gap often remains between normative expectations and empirical realities of participation (Cornwall & Coelho, 2007). This raises questions on how power relations, prevailing in governance structures where policies and implementation are negotiated, determine what knowledge is considered valid in decision-making for implementing mega-projects and how these relations influence which types of knowledge are actually used.

This paper focuses on the different types of knowledge and the way they are embedded in decision-making processes in planning and implementing the N2 Gateway Project. This implies a focus on both knowledge content, power struggles related to recognition of knowledge, and processes of knowledge mobility as decisions are made.

THE N2 GATEWAY PROJECT

Housing in South Africa has been marked by extreme inequalities along lines of class and race, and current housing policy reflects a major pro-poor agenda of the South African government (COHRE, 2009). Prior housing policies designed to reduce the housing backlog from the apartheid era were flawed in allocating land in the periphery of the city and often had poor infrastructure. By prioritizing the simple delivery of formal housing, people’s need to be close to opportunities of employment and
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Social networks was overlooked (Huchzermeyer, 2006). A move from ‘Housing’ to ‘Human Settlements’ recognized such dilemmas, shifting from narrow formal housing policies to a more holistic focus in the 2000s. The National Department of Housing presented a new national housing policy in 2004 called ‘Breaking New Ground’ (BNG) (National Department of Housing, 2004). This policy put housing in the broader context of building ‘settlements’ and including infrastructure, access to jobs and social services. The Upgrading Informal Settlements Programme (UISP) is part of this BNG policy, representing a more socially embedded approach to informal settlement upgrading.

Huchzermeyer (2011) has argued that the BNG and South Africa’s drive to upgrade informal settlements cannot only be understood as a pro-poor agenda of the government, but also needs to be located in the government’s drive for global competitiveness. She has argued that South Africa’s hosting of the 2010 World Soccer Cup played an important role in moves to draft the BNG plan. However, instead of focusing on upgrading as described in the BNG, meeting eradication targets and redeveloping ‘visible’ informal settlements became a strong focus. A new target to eradicate informal settlements by 2014 influenced and shaped the way in which the BNG initiative, of which the N2 Gateway mega-project became part, is being carried out (Huchzermeyer, 2011).

The N2 Gateway Project became a BNG pilot project, involving the upgrading and relocation of settlements along the N2 freeway between Cape Town International Airport and the city centre (Smit, 2008). Joe Slovo, New Rest, Gxagxa, Kanana, Barcelona, Europe and Vukuzenzele formed the targeted informal settlements for the project. Unlike regular housing projects, the N2 Gateway Project was initiated as an experiment in inter-governmental cooperation creating integrated human settlements (Smit, 2008). In 2005, all three tiers of government signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) setting out roles and responsibilities (LDHSG, 2006). There were high expectations, as it was expected that the cooperation between three levels of government would unlock barriers, speed up service delivery and avoid bureaucracy (National Ministry of Housing et al., 2005).

Many reasons have been given for the selection of the N2 Gateway as pilot project. The official reason is to improve the lives of informal settlement dwellers along the N2 Gateway, as these settlements were densely populated and plagued by a range of social and economic problems (Smit, 2008). However, the settlements along the N2 Gateway were also significant in the metropolitan area, because of their visibility and strategic location; and these are considered additional reasons for its selection as national pilot project. Upgrading these settlements could help the city attract foreign investment and stimulate economic growth (Smit, 2008: 7). Finally, the project has been linked to the 2010 World Cup Soccer Tournament and the government’s goal for greater global competitiveness (COHRE, 2009).

Joe Slovo

One component of the N2 Gateway Project consists of the informal settlement of Joe Slovo, situated 10 km east of the CBD of Cape Town, on a vacant strip of land along the N2 highway (CORC, 2009). It borders Langa, the oldest black township in Cape Town, on the south and east side. Joe Slovo was established in the early 1990s and became mainly occupied by migrants (CORC, 2009). It is a relatively attractive informal settlement, as it is closely located to the city centre (CORC, 2009).

Joe Slovo became part of the first phase of the N2 Gateway Project in 2004. Projects for Joe Slovo were divided into three phases, each characterized by different types of project funding and housing. The first housing phase, whose construction started in 2005, was planned to produce 705 rental flats.
on the west side of the informal settlement area (COHRE, 2009). It was to be funded under the terms of the new Social Housing Restructuring Capital Grant, and aimed at households earning R1,500 to R7,500 per month. Because of this income requirement, approximately 85% of the households in the Joe Slovo informal settlement were ineligible for these units and had to be relocated.

When it became clear that providing multi-story rental housing for the poor was not a viable option under the subsidy framework used at that time, plans for Joe Slovo had to be changed. Phase 2 of Joe Slovo therefore focused on the construction of 567 mortgage bond houses for households in the middle-income range (R3500 to R7500 per month) (Thubelisha Homes, 2007). For this purpose, the government entered in a partnership with the First National Bank (FNB) (Lier, 2011). The result was that more residents of the area had to be relocated, as residents of Joe Slovo could not afford these houses either. At the time of the study, a majority of the bonded houses in Joe Slovo were still not inhabited, even though built.

The rationality behind the third phase of Joe Slovo can only be understood in the context of a conflict around the project in 2008. In seeking to get an eviction order for clearing targeted areas for housing development in the first phase of Joe Slovo, the national and provincial government turned to the Cape High Court in 2007 (Cape High Court, 2008); later taking the case to the South African Constitutional Court in 2008 (Constitutional Court, 2009). The eviction order was deemed necessary as many Joe Slovo residents refused to leave their shacks for project development, as they were afraid of being evicted. In 2007 residents even occupied the N2 Gateway in protest (Lier, 2011). Although the Constitutional Court eventually ruled in favour of the applicants and gave an eviction order, it also prescribed conditions for the way it should take place. One condition required that ‘meaningful engagement’ with the community take place (Constitutional Court, 2009). Another stipulated that 70% of the houses in Joe Slovo were reserved for former Joe Slovo residents. This meant that Phase 3 would have to target low-income families, in contrast to the rental housing of Phase 1 and the bonded housing of Phase 2 (Lier, 2011). Consequently, Phase 3 became an in-situ upgrade project under the national Upgrading of Informal Settlements (UISP) programme (Constitutional Court Affidavit, 2008). The construction of these 2,886 ‘give-away’ units commenced in March 2011. In March 2013, a total number of 588 units were completed in Joe Slovo Phase 3A and handed over to Joe Slovo residents (HAD, 2013). At the time of research, Phase 3 was still under construction.
Although the N2 Gateway Project is still in progress, and has succeeded in providing housing to quite a number of shack dwellers along the N2 freeway, implementation faced numerous difficulties, such as the mismatch in housing supply and demand and the subsequent protests. In the following sections we examine these issues by analyzing the use of knowledge in project decision-making processes.

ACTORS, ROLES AND PRIORITIES IN DECISION-MAKING PROCESSES

This study analyses the way power relations influence types of knowledge used in decision-making processes of the N2 Gateway Project. Such power relations were mapped by identifying actors’ roles and priorities in the Project, providing insight into reasons for certain actors to cooperate with each other, and why powerful actors decide to include or exclude certain stakeholders in the processes involved (Kennedy et al., 2011). Identifying the discourses actors have adopted for their role helps explain choices in project priorities and their implementation (Hajer 2005). All actors and committees are mapped in an overview of the N2 Gateway Project governance structure [fig. 3] and [fig. 4]. The changes occurring in power relations are reflected from the differences seen in the planning phase of Project compared to the situation in Joe Slovo Phase 3.
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The interviews showed that the actors involved use different sets of discourses leading to conflicting priorities for the N2 Gateway Project. The M3 Executive Committee, consisting of the National Minister of Housing, the Western Cape Member of the Executive Council (MEC) and the Mayor of Cape Town, has the political mandate for the project and has played a leading role in defining project objectives and priorities. The Inter-Governmental Steering Committee of the N2 Gateway, consisting of senior officials from all three levels of government, has an executive role. Initially, the M3 Executive Committee adopted a pro-poor/pro-growth discourse for the first conceptualization of the Project; both housing delivery for the poor as well as stimulating economic growth were defined as main objectives. However, the high-level politicians of the M3 Executive Committee have steadily prioritized the ‘pro-growth’ agenda, linking the project to the 2010 World Cup and adopting the neoliberal concept of the ‘global competitive city’. Respondents presume that this framing is mainly a consequence of politicians wanting to make it their personal prestige project. The dominance of the ‘pro-growth’ agenda led to objectives, such as the redevelopment of ‘visible’ settlements and rapid implementation. Accordingly, the M3 Executive Committee felt that limiting bureaucracy would be a key instrument to achieve faster implementation.

The priorities defined by the political actors of the M3 Executive Committee have also been decisive in determining the actors brought on board during the planning phase. This is illustrated by the decision of the national and provincial government to limit consultation and involvement of experts, civil society organizations, targeted communities and eventually even the lower levels of government to ensure rapid implementation. For example, the City of Cape Town was quickly removed from its initial implementing role because high-level politicians of the M3 Executive Committee felt that project implementation needed to be taken away from the “administrative stranglehold of government” (Sisulu, 2007) to achieve fast delivery. Instead, project implementation was given to a private agency called Thubelisha Homes (Smit, 2008). Although several Working Groups consisting of high-ranking government officials, professionals and experts to develop frameworks that could feed into project planning were set up, their role has also remained limited because of the priority given to fast implementation. Targeted communities have not been consulted at all during project planning. Thus, in giving the ‘pro-growth’ agenda priority, the ‘pro-poor’ priorities such as low-cost housing delivery and meaningful engagement were bypassed during the planning phase of the project, leading to a mismatch between pro-growth objectives and pro-poor needs.

The analysis of the planning phase indicates that the N2 Gateway Project resembles a classic mega-project, characterized by a top-down planning approach of government, focused on economic growth strategies, and led by exceptionalist governance processes marked by elite-driven priorities (Swyngedouw et al., 2002; Kennedy et al., 2011). Moreover, the project involves a range of actors, who actively use a ‘pro-growth’ or ‘pro-poor’ agenda for framing their priorities towards the project (Sutherland et al., 2011).

Joe Slovo Phase 3, in contrast, shows that one implementing phase of the N2 Gateway Project more closely resembles a governance network approach (Painter, 1994). Because communities opposed forced relocation, the national government turned to the court for an eviction order in 2007 and 2008. Although the Constitutional Court eventually ruled in favour of the applicants, it also judged that such an order should take place under circumstances of meaningful engagement with the communities. Therefore, the Social Compact was created to “promote mutual understanding and partnership between government and the affected communities in recognition of the experience, role, contribution, and expertise of both groups” (HDA, 2011: 2). This Social Compact is embodied in the Project
Steering Committee (PSC), established in January 2011, which provides a platform for all stakeholders involved in Joe Slovo Phase 3. Regular members are the Housing Development Agency (HDA), a national housing agency tasked with project management of Joe Slovo, Sobambisana (the project developer), and representatives of the community. During monthly meetings, overall project progress is monitored and issues like project status, beneficiary allocation and local employment are discussed. However, conflicting priorities and local power relations still influence real participation. Although several groups claim to represent the community, only one group is represented in the PSC. The HDA has admitted that it is hard to work with other representative bodies of the Joe Slovo community, as the dynamic nature of these groups (turnover of members, split-ups and mergers) is difficult to accommodate. In addition, some community representatives advocate free-standing houses, while the group currently represented in the PSC has accepted the smaller, in situ upgrading units planned for Joe Slovo Phase 3. Conflicting priorities might thus also explain why certain groups are excluded from participation. By prioritizing project progress over meaningful engagement, government through HDA still decides which community representatives are allowed a seat in PSC.

In sum, the findings confirm the argument that actors are likely to be unequally included in decision-making processes for urban mega-projects (Kennedy et al. 2011). Although it is argued that there is a shift away from government as the dominant locus of power to societies in which different actors participate in governance networks (Torfing et al. 2012), the case of the N2 Gateway rather shows a dynamic, ‘hybrid’ governance structure, with government actors dominating the phase of project conception and a shift towards broader governance networks during the implementation phase, although higher levels of government remain dominant. As the N2 Gateway Project has not only brought together actors on the same ‘horizontal’ level but also across vertical scale levels, with unequal power relations, it is more legitimate to talk of a hybrid governance structure instead of governance networks (McCann & Ward, 2011).

Findings also show that decision-making processes for urban mega-projects are highly politicized. By emphasizing how the roles and priorities of actors match or oppose each other, power relations were revealed, which define the roles in the governance structure around the N2 Gateway Project. The next section analyses how these patterns of influence the types of knowledge used in the different phases of the N2 Gateway Project.
[fig. 3] Schematic overview of actors and committees in the governance structure for the planning phase of the N2 Gateway
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KNOWLEDGE PRODUCTION, USE AND CONTESTATION IN THE N2 GATEWAY PROJECT

In urban governance systems, various ‘communities of interests’ make knowledge claims regarding urban development projects (Scott, 2011). The debate suggests that including multiple types of knowledge in governance processes increases cooperation between stakeholders (Hjorth, 2003), citizens’ ownership of projects (Hordijk & Baud, 2006) and helps governments to become more knowledgeable about local situations and needs of targeted groups (Rakodi, 2003). However, types of knowledge are valued unequally in decision-making processes and power relations influence what types of knowledge are prioritized in implementing such projects. In this section, different decision-making processes in planning and implementation phases were identified, and an analysis made of the types of knowledge included and excluded in decision-making [fig. 5] and [fig. 6].

A wide range of types of knowledge was produced for the project, including expert, contextual-embedded, sector-specific and community-based knowledge (Van Ewijk & Baud 2009). Formulation of objectives for the Project was mainly done by high-level politicians in the M3 Executive Committee. As these politicians wanted to make it their personal prestige project, political, contextual-embedded knowledge was mainly included to identify objectives and needs deemed popular among the voting population. Subsequently, a Business Plan was developed for the project, for which six working groups were installed, including a Financial Working Group as well as a Working Group.

[fig. 4] Schematic overview of actors and committees in the governance structure for Joe Slovo Phase 3 of the N2 Gateway
Housing Typologies. These groups consisted of high-ranking officials from various government departments as well as consultants and experts, and were meant to develop frameworks that could feed into project planning by bringing in expert knowledge. Budgeting was the main responsibility of the National and Provincial Departments of Housing. Economic, contextual embedded knowledge was produced to plan budgets for a project of this magnitude. Technical planning for the N2 Gateway project was mainly done by the Inter-Governmental Steering Committee and the City of Cape Town. The Inter-Governmental Steering Committee has mainly produced technical knowledge on policy making, while the City of Cape Town has mainly brought in contextual embedded, technical knowledge for preparatory work, such as impact assessments, managing land rights and the planning and delivery of bulk services such as water and sanitation. Contextual embedded, technical knowledge with regard to policy-making has also been used for setting up a beneficiary allocation policy, which was developed by government actors from different levels. Finally, during the planning phase the City of Cape Town developed a tender process to select consortia of construction companies. Technical knowledge was incorporated in preparing the ‘packages’ for the tender process.

During the implementation of Joe Slovo Phase 3, project management was done by the PSC. As more space for participation was created in this committee, different types of knowledge were produced for project management. The HDA produces economic knowledge as well as technical, contextual knowledge and experience in project management, in managing the contracts between the contractors and provincial government. Sobambisana, the project developer, brings in professional, technical knowledge, especially with regard to the housing construction. Community representatives mainly bring in local community-based knowledge, produced by people voicing their concerns to the representatives. In addition, other professionals or government officials are occasionally invited to PSC meetings when deemed necessary, which means that different types of contextual-embedded, sector-specific knowledge are brought in on request. In addition, financial management for Joe Slovo Phase 3 is the main responsibility of the Western Cape Provincial Government who uses economic knowledge for this purpose. Contextual-embedded, technical knowledge for policy implementation is used for beneficiary management, for which the Allocation Committee is responsible, bringing together representatives from all three levels of government. Sector-specific, technical knowledge is used by the City of Cape Town for designing delivery of bulk services in Joe Slovo Phase 3.

In sum, a wide range of knowledge types is produced for the project, including expert, contextual-embedded, sector-specific and community-based knowledge. However, stakeholders valued these knowledge types differentially, and thus not every type has been included equally strongly in decision-making. The political priorities formulated by the M3 Executive Committee within the framework of the ‘pro-growth’ approach not only determined the extent to which different actors were involved in decision-making processes, but also the types of knowledge included in the planning phase of the N2 Gateway Project. The rush for implementation led to the decision to limit consultation and the role of local government. Therefore, many types of knowledge produced for the project have been ignored. For example, the expert knowledge of the Working Groups was eventually neglected, as their ideas were deemed too costly or difficult, and would hamper the objective of fast implementation. Moreover, many respondents complained that no time was taken for financial planning of the project, which meant that no financial or economic knowledge was eventually included in the planning phase. The decision to limit bureaucracy also dismissed the technical input of the City of Cape Town and community-based knowledge was not brought in at all during the planning phase.
In adopting a growth-oriented approach and prioritizing fast implementation of the project, community-based and technical contextual-embedded types of knowledge were not valued as relevant enough by the M3 Executive Committee to include in the decision-making process. This confirms the finding of Hordijk & Baud (2006) urban governance processes have a tendency to dismiss contextual knowledge as less important. Moreover, in adopting a growth-oriented approach, the objective of the M3 Executive Committee for the project shifted from housing delivery for the poor to the redevelopment of ‘visible’ settlements. In this respect, the M3 Executive might have deliberately excluded local knowledge as the real ‘needs of the poor’ became less relevant in formulating the objectives for the project. Knowledge inclusion and exclusion has been used strategically by the M3 Executive Committee as a typical example of knowledge contestation (Hordijk & Baud, 2006).

As the private sector shared the priority of fast implementation with the M3 Executive Committee, professional technical knowledge of the private sector was preferred over other types of knowledge. For example, Sobambisana was chosen to become responsible for the housing designs, rather than the innovative ideas of the Working Group Housing Typologies. This illustrates how private sector knowledge was prioritized over expert knowledge. Accordingly, the N2 Gateway Project confirms the assumption of urban regime theory that public actors and the private sector often form governing coalitions in the development of mega-projects (Kennedy et al., 2011). This coalition was formed because of shared values and conceptions on the desirable patterns for urban development, thereby forming ‘natural allies’ (Kennedy et al., 2011).

The exclusion of several types of knowledge in the planning phase has to some extent been ‘repaired’ by the participatory spaces created through the PSC for Joe Slovo Phase 3. The PSC not only enables actors to bring in different types of knowledge, but also functions as a platform for knowledge exchange through its frequent meetings. Through the PSC, connections between stakeholders stimulating knowledge exchange have been institutionalized (recommended by Hordijk & Baud (2006)). Community representatives are now able to bring in community-based, local knowledge, while the HDA and Sobambisana mainly bring in contextual-embedded, technical knowledge. However, conflicting priorities and local politics have led to limited community representation in the PSC. The value of community-based knowledge is still not considered sufficiently important by the HDA and Sobambisana, as project progress is prioritized against a wider range of community-based knowledge being included in Joe Slovo project management.

Thus, the analysis of knowledge use in decision-making processes for the N2 Gateway Project shows that mainly governmental actors from the national and provincial level have defined whose knowledge is included and excluded for the project. Their choice for certain knowledge is best explained by their strategies to prioritize certain objectives, primarily based on shared interests with specific actors. Mandatory decisions ordered by outside agencies (i.e. the Court) have expanded the range of actors whose knowledge has been included in the implementation phase. The next section turns to the question of how this knowledge management has influenced outcomes of the decision-making processes of the project.
### Decisions and processes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Decisions and processes</th>
<th>Actors</th>
<th>Sources</th>
<th>Types of knowledge</th>
<th>Excluded knowledge</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Formulating objectives</td>
<td>MJ Executive Committee (National Minister of Housing, MEC for Local Government and Housing, Mayor of Cape Town)</td>
<td>(International) policy documents, laws, factual information</td>
<td>Contextual embedded: political and technical knowledge with regard to policy making</td>
<td>Expert Contextual embedded: community based, economic and other technical knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Setting frameworks</td>
<td>Working Groups (City of Cape Town, professionals, experts)</td>
<td>(Academic) research, policy documents, laws</td>
<td>Expert Contextual embedded: technical and economic</td>
<td>Very limited use of frameworks in final planning, thus knowledge produced for these frameworks itself</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Budgeting</td>
<td>National Department of Housing, Provincial Department for Local Government and Housing</td>
<td>Laws, policy documents</td>
<td>Contextual embedded: economic?</td>
<td>Contextual embedded: economic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technical planning</td>
<td>Inter-Governmental Steering Committee, City of Cape Town</td>
<td>Experience, policy documents, laws</td>
<td>Contextual embedded: technical with regard to policy making</td>
<td>Contextual embedded: technical knowledge of City of Cape Town, community based knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Setting up a beneficiary allocation policy</td>
<td>National Department of Housing, Provincial Department for Local Government and Housing</td>
<td>Laws, policy documents, policy research</td>
<td>Contextual embedded: political and technical with regard to policy making</td>
<td>Contextual embedded: community based knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tender process for development of project</td>
<td>City of Cape Town</td>
<td>Experience, policy documents</td>
<td>Contextual embedded: technical and economic</td>
<td>Expert knowledge Sufficient contextual embedded, technical knowledge</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

[fig. 5] Schematic overview of decision-making processes for the planning phase of the N2 Gateway

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Decisions and processes</th>
<th>Actors</th>
<th>Sources</th>
<th>Types of knowledge</th>
<th>Excluded knowledge</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Project management</td>
<td>Project Steering Committee: Sobambisana, community representatives, occasional guests (other representatives, professionals), led by the HDA</td>
<td>Experience, policy documents, agreements, project status updates, local information</td>
<td>Contextual embedded: technical, economical, community based</td>
<td>Expert Contextual embedded: community based knowledge from community representatives not in the PSC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Defining who is represented in the Project Steering Committee</td>
<td>HDA</td>
<td>Policy documents, agreements</td>
<td>Contextual embedded: technical and community based</td>
<td>Contextual embedded: community based knowledge and tactical knowledge of who the community feels represented by:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construction process</td>
<td>Sobambisana</td>
<td>Experience, official design</td>
<td>Contextual embedded: technical and economic</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beneficiary management</td>
<td>HDA, monitored by Allocations Committee</td>
<td>Policy documents, municipal waiting list, project status updates</td>
<td>Codified Contextual embedded: technical</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local employment management</td>
<td>Sobambisana, community representatives, Community Liaison Officers</td>
<td>Employment policy documents, local information of population</td>
<td>Contextual embedded: technical, community based Tactical knowledge</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Delivery of services</td>
<td>City of Cape Town (Department of Human Settlements and Directorate of Utility Services)</td>
<td>Experience, municipal document for standards, policy documents</td>
<td>Codified Contextual embedded: technical and economic</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

[fig. 6] Schematic overview of decision-making processes for Joe Slovo Phase 3 of the N2 Gateway
IMPLICATIONS OF THE INCLUSION AND EXCLUSION OF KNOWLEDGE

The N2 Gateway Project, as pilot project of the BNG plan, was intended to address the housing crisis of the City of Cape Town and to function as a catalyst for attracting investment and stimulating economic growth. It was also intended to be an experimental project in inter-governmental cooperation. The previous sections have presented the roles and priorities of the actors involved and how patterns of influence embedded in the governance structure led to certain types of knowledge being in- or excluded in project decision-making processes. Although the N2 Gateway Project and Joe Slovo Phase 3 are still under construction, the implications of this particular use of knowledge for the project so far are presented as a preliminary analysis.

It has been argued that involving multiple stakeholders and including multiple types of knowledge in urban governance processes enhances decision-making (Boulding & Wampler, 2010; Cornwall & Coelho, 2007; Hjorth, 2003; Hordijk & Baud, 2006; Rakodi, 2003). However, the previous section has shown that not all types of knowledge are valued equally by stakeholders in the N2 Gateway Project and therefore not every type was included in decision-making. Even though the N2 Gateway Project and Joe Slovo Phase 3 are still under construction, this research mainly shows that neglecting certain types of knowledge in the planning phase of the project has had negative consequences for its implementation.

First, in adopting the ‘pro-growth’ approach, the M3 Executive Committee considered the use of technical bureaucratic knowledge counterproductive to quick implementation, a view which impacted negatively on transparency and accountability in conceptualization as well as implementation of the N2 Gateway Project. The politically driven agenda and top-down planning bypassed the potential knowledge contribution of several actors, which could have helped build and incorporate bureaucratic systems, and provided various checks and balances ensuring accountability. This lack of accountability, in turn, caused its own problems, such as unsigned contracts, confusion about the division of roles and lack of sanctions against failing performances. In this sense, the N2 Gateway forms a typical example of a mega-project, lack of accountability being identified as a common problem of mega-projects (Flyvbjerg et al., 2003). Establishing good governance and transparency practices are often avoided by project initiators, as they see these practices as counterproductive to starting these projects (Flyvbjerg et al., 2003). Obviously, the M3 Executive Committee saw bureaucracy as hampering fast implementation of the project. Therefore, no mechanisms ensuring accountability were incorporated in project planning.

Secondly, the importance of economic knowledge for financial planning was eventually not acknowledged, which led to many budget overruns during the course of the project and lack of funding for extra facilities. Again, this is seen as typical of mega-projects, as Kennedy et al. (2011, p. 14) name cost overruns as “endemic” to mega-projects. Continuous alterations in initial planning, a mismatch in housing supply and demand and resulting implementation delays have mainly been a consequence of excluding community-based knowledge. Lack of assessment of average household income in Joe Slovo during project planning led to housing construction in Joe Slovo’s first two phases unaffordable for residents of the informal settlement. Also, no research was done on the population size of the settlements, which meant that the design for Joe Slovo Phase 3 had to be changed several times to incorporate housing designs with higher densities. Finally, a lack of sound financial planning and technical knowledge has given the project little space for more than simply delivering housing, instead of developing integrated human settlements taking social and economic aspects into account. While the designers envisaged that ground floors of houses could be used for
commercial retail to give residents economic opportunities, it was considered too difficult and too costly by government to develop an allocation policy that would entail both. Moreover, political objectives are still focused on housing delivery, as commercial buildings are seen as taking away residential space. This is remarkable, as the N2 Gateway was labelled the pilot project for the BNG plan, which emphasized the need for integrated development. This shows that adopting the ‘pro-growth’ discourse for the conceptualization of the N2 Gateway has overshadowed the ‘pro-poor’ agenda in addressing the needs of the poor. However, the many delays in implementation show that the exclusion of knowledge has hampered the achievement of pro-growth objectives (i.e. fast implementation).

Although mostly negative impacts were found because of the neglect of certain types of knowledge, positive implications were identified also, due to the inclusion of a various types of knowledge in the PSC meetings for Joe Slovo Phase 3. The PSC, comprising representatives of different actors within the project, provides a platform for expressing needs and interests, for exchanging knowledge and for gaining mutual understanding. Because different actors bring in complementary sources of knowledge, mutual learning through knowledge exchange was enabled. All representatives have indicated that such mutual understanding and the opportunity to use different types of knowledge benefited project progress. This supports the hypothesis, which argues that involving different stakeholders and types of knowledge enhances urban governance processes (Boulding & Wampler, 2010). It also confirms Hjorth’s (2003) statement that combining different ways of knowing enables different actors to work together. Although the implementation phase of the project has improved the situation, full representation of the community remains a problematic issue, so that not everyone’s relevant knowledge is taken into account.

**DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION**

This paper has examined how different forms of knowledge are produced, used and contested in providing strategic inputs for decision-making processes embedded in urban governance networks. The analysis has shown that the N2 Gateway Project shares many of the characteristics of mega-projects elsewhere, such as lack of mechanisms for accountability and following discourses as the ‘global competitive city’. The N2 Gateway Project therefore illustrates the global trend towards increasing global competitiveness by putting high profile mega-projects on urban development agendas. These projects are often strongly politically driven: in the case of the N2 Gateway, high level politicians made it their personal prestige project and prioritized speedy delivery at the expense of inclusive development and participatory processes. Although the structures for participatory decision-making were officially installed through the BNG, the case study of the N2 Gateway shows that there was a gap between these policy expectations and empirical reality. With the 2010 World Soccer Cup in mind, political agendas determined the time frame of the project, and thus who was included in the project. The pro-growth agenda and the pro-poor needs did not match up. In this respect, the project shows the characteristics of authoritarian and top-down decision-making in shaping urban spaces rather than one in which several stakeholders participate in governance networks.

One reason why politicians are reluctant to embark on participatory processes is that they fear that their priorities are not shared, that these processes are time-consuming and that they cause insecurity about responsibilities in the project. However, a lack of inclusionary decision-making also means that several types of knowledge are excluded in the conceptualization and implementation of the project. This study shows the negative consequences for the project. The lack of meaningful engagement and
The exclusion of community-based knowledge led to failed incorporation of pro-poor priorities in formulating project objectives. Housing delivery for the poor was not identified as a central priority, which led to a mismatch in housing supply and demand. Even more striking is the neglect of ‘meaningful engagement’, because the need for fast delivery turned out to be, ironically, not necessarily the quicker option because communities and court cases delayed the project. Prioritizing pro-growth objectives and the exclusion of knowledge have thus not only overshadowed the pro-poor agenda, but have also hampered the pro-growth objectives themselves. The study has also shown that the process of implementation encountered negative consequences because several sources and types of knowledge were excluded, as for instance shown by cost overruns. The delayed project implementation as well as the failure to achieve pro-poor and pro-growth objectives emphasizes the need to include various sources and types of knowledge in urban governance processes. This is also supported by the finding when better (although still not perfect) participatory structures were established for Joe Slovo Phase 3 through the PSC, project progress and mutual understanding was enhanced. This paper supports the assumption of the Chance2Sustain project, that “in order to promote more resilient patterns of development, cities need to incorporate different types of knowledge into their strategic planning activities with the active participation of various types of actors” (Kennedy et al., 2011, p. 3).

Debates on urban governance have argued that there is a shift away from government as the dominant actor in contemporary societies, towards arrangements in which different actors participate in governance networks (Baud et al., 2011; Barnett & Scott, 2007; Mathur, 2011). This case study on the implementation of a mega-project has not confirmed this argument; in the case of the N2 Gateway, one could rather talk of a ‘hybrid’ governance structure, with governmental actors dominating during project conception, while a shift towards a structure more resembling the governance network model marks the implementation phase, although it was an outside agency (i.e. the Constitutional Court) who mandated participation of different stakeholders at this stage. The hybrid nature of the governance structure stems from the fact that the N2 Gateway Project brought together stakeholders not only from the same ‘horizontal’ levels, but also across vertical scale levels. The most typical example is the cooperation of national and provincial government working together with communities through the HDA in the PSC.

While the idea of a governance network implicitly suggests that actors are equal, the continuous dominance of higher levels of government in the N2 Gateway Project indicates that inequities remain in urban governance structures. Moreover, actors have influenced the project in official as well as unofficial roles: the communities influenced the project by delaying implementation, indirectly enforcing meaningful engagement through the court case; the private sector defined the project design due to a lack of planning; and the local government provided essential technical planning even though eventually removed from its implementing role. These varying levels of influence and relations across scale levels rather points towards a ‘hybrid’ arrangement of urban governance instead of ‘flat’ governance networks with equal relationships. The schematic overview of the actors and committees in [fig. 3] and [fig. 4] also points in the same direction (McCann & Ward, 2011). It will be of interest to explore the idea of hybrid arrangements further, with its implications that various actors increasingly participate in urban governance process, but rejecting the idea that this happens in ‘equal’ network arrangements. This means that more attention should be paid to patterns of influence, and how unequal relations come into being, in researching participatory processes in building resilient urban development.
The discussion on how knowledge is constructed, used and contested in urban governance projects has indicated that knowledge cannot be considered a ‘simple’ concept. This research has shown that knowledge use is a highly politicized process, with knowledge being value-laden and representing different, conflicting interests. Hence, knowledge is used strategically by stakeholders in such urban development projects. The case of the N2 Gateway shows how powerful actors determine what types of knowledge are included and excluded in decision-making processes by the ways they formulate their priorities. Hence, the findings support the recommendation of Hordijk & Baud (2006, p. 669) that “research needs to reflect the variety of knowledge existing among the actors involved in urban governance, and the conflicts in interpretation and valuation of knowledge sources”. Therefore, future research on knowledge inclusion in processes of urban governance should acknowledge that the use of knowledge is conflict-prone and contested.

Finally, the case study of the N2 Gateway should be seen within the specific socio-economic and historic context of South Africa. The country’s history of apartheid, the economic pro-growth, pro-poor strategies and its specific institutional framework make it difficult to deduce general lessons from this study. Nevertheless, further research is recommended on several aspects. With regard to hybrid arrangements of governance, it will be interesting to see how future urban projects in South Africa take the lessons learnt from the implementation of this mega-project into account. Comparative analyses in other countries are necessary to find out how the inclusion of several types of knowledge enhances urban governance, and to examine how this inclusion of knowledge can be stimulated and institutionalized in governance structures in future.

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