Trading Places
Accessing land in African cities

Mark Napier, Stephen Berrisford, Caroline Wanjiku Kihato,
Rob McGaffin and Lauren Royston
This book provides an analytical perspective that is rigorously informed by detailed empirical work, and offers policy advice that is pragmatically grounded in the realities of governance and everyday urban life. *Trading Places* provides no quick fix, but rather a perspective that allows us to ‘cope with complexity’ and a set of proposals to progressively reshape the relationship between the market, the state, and the urban poor. It requires us to be ‘more nuanced, more incremental, more patient’, but offers us the hope that this approach will lead to land markets that will work more equitably and to state interventions that are more responsive to the lives and needs of the urban poor.

*Trading Places* provokes us to think differently, but also leaves us with a new sense of optimism. I congratulate Urban LandMark for this publication, and for the many other contributions it has made over the past seven years. May its influence expand and may this lead to real change in the lives of those presently living in poverty in cities across Africa.

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*Prof. Philip Harrison, South African Research Chair in Development Planning and Modelling, School of Architecture and Planning: University of the Witwatersrand*

Fresh and surprising insights based on years of robust analysis that will take policy makers in a very different direction to current practice. This book is critical reading for anyone wanting to shape a more secure life for the most vulnerable of Africa’s city dwellers.

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*Helena McLeod, Director: Energy and Environment Partnership (EEP), Southern and East Africa*
The developing world is urbanising fast. In the process new systems of urban land ownership, transfer and governance are also emerging – often from the bottom up. Understanding how these work, and how they interface with wider markets and with existing land governance regimes, is crucial to urban development that makes space for the poor. This book offers fascinating new insight into these dynamics.

Dr Kate Philip, Programme Manager: Inequality and Economic Marginalisation, Trade & Industrial Policy Strategies (TIPS)

Urbanisation and concomitant growth of informal settlements has reached a crisis point. The growing violent protests are testament to this crisis, with access to land a central point of conflict.

Trading Places addresses these issues through examining the nature of markets, property tenure, and regulation with specific emphasis on their impact on the poor. It argues that markets, particularly informal markets, are important mechanisms for the poor to access land and develop local economies. The value of the book is that it provides a wealth of evidence for its arguments and brings to the fore an understanding of the social dimensions of markets and local practices.

Monty Narsoo, Governance Advisor: South African National Upgrading Support Programme