

# Informal Economies and Urban Governance in Nigeria: Popular Empowerment or Political Exclusion?

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**Abstract:** This article examines how popular organizational strategies and coping mechanisms affect broader trajectories of urban governance in contemporary Africa. Does the proliferation of informal livelihood networks and associations foster economic empowerment and popular political participation, or do these informal processes breed poverty and organizational chaos? This article explores the link between popular organizational strategies and structural outcomes, focusing on how institutional process and power relations shape the access of the poor to resources and decision-making structures in decentralizing urban environments. Case studies from Nigeria trace how liberalization has fragmented informal organizational strategies into networks of accumulation and survival that tend to marginalize the interests of the poor within informal enterprise associations. Distinctive political strategies of informal enterprise associations are analyzed to show why dynamic informal organization is unable to break through the barriers of social and legal marginalization that trap the urban poor in clientel forms of political incorporation. This suggests that “social capital” within the informal economy may fail to improve popular political representation and governance outcomes even in contexts of decentralization.

**Résumé:** Cet article examine la manière dont les stratégies populaires organisationnelles et les mécanismes de gestion des problèmes impactent les trajectoires plus larges de la gouvernance urbaine en Afrique contemporaine. Est-ce que la prolifération de réseaux informels d'échanges et d'organisations dans les milieux urbains pauvres incitent à une prise de pouvoir économique et à une participation popu-

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laire ou bien est-ce qu'elles perturbent le développement institutionnel et amènent la pauvreté, le conflit social et le chaos ? Au delà des analyses circulaires reliant les stratégies populaires et la gouvernance urbaine, cet article explore le lien entre les stratégies populaires et les résultats structurels, se concentrant sur la manière dont le processus institutionnel et les relations de pouvoir façonnent l'accès des populations défavorisées aux ressources et aux structures décisionnelles dans les environnements urbains de l'Afrique. Les études de cas au Niger retracent le processus selon lequel la libéralisation a fragmenté les stratégies organisationnelles informelles en réseaux d'accumulation et de survie qui tendent à marginaliser les intérêts des pauvres à l'intérieur d'entreprises associatives informelles. Les stratégies politiques distinctes des associations patrimoniales et modernistes sont analysées pour montrer comment le capital social des acteurs économiques informels est incapable de traverser les barrières de la marginalisation sociale et économique qui les enferment dans des formes clientèles politisées. Ainsi les niveaux élevés d'organisation informelle et de "capital social" pourraient être la cause du manque de représentation politique et d'une gouvernance inefficace.

## Introduction

Amid the upheavals of political and economic liberalization, opinions are divided as to whether Africa's cities are centers of conviviality and popular empowerment or black holes of poverty and violence. What is clear is that the contemporary urban policy emphasis on decentralization, deregulation, democratization, and the privatization of public services has intensified both economic hardship and the prominence of informal networks and associations in the organization of urban life. In the process, African cities have become increasingly complex places, characterized by cross-cutting processes of high unemployment, popular livelihood strategies, collapsing physical and social infrastructure, communal service provision, patrimonialism, and burgeoning civil society.<sup>1</sup> As Edgar Pieterse (2005:139) points out in a recent collection on urban Africa, "Despite the speed and intensity of urban change it is clear that agency is flourishing and much remains to be done to recast political practice in the city toward a more comprehensive understanding of what is going on. . . ."

In this article, I explore the question of how popular organizational strategies and coping mechanisms affect broader trajectories of urban governance in contemporary Africa. Do the informal livelihood networks and associations of the urban poor foster economic empowerment and popular political participation, or do they disrupt institutional development and breed mounting poverty, social conflict, and organizational chaos? This question demands that we move beyond the micro-social focus on individual agency and resource mobilization, and beyond the macro-social focus on structural outcomes and formal institutional failure. It requires instead an examination of the link between popular strategies and structural outcomes that takes account of how institutional process and power relations shape the access of the poor to resources and decision-making structures

within African urban environments. In short, the challenge here is to transcend tautological interpretations of the relationship between social capital and urban governance by tracing the actual mechanisms through which social resources feed into political processes.

Tracing these processes involves “bring[ing] these multiple networks and arenas of urban governance into view so that more fine-grained critical research can be conducted” (Pieterse 2005:142). Following recent analyses of poverty and urban governance in Africa put forward in the work of Carole Rakodi (2001), Tostensen et al. (2001), and others, I understand governance to mean the regulatory effect of the interaction between government and nongovernmental forces: “Governance is thus about . . . the way the power structures of the day and civil society interrelate to produce a civic public realm” (Rakodi 2001:344). As many contemporary studies have pointed out, understanding governance processes in the highly informalized environments of urban Africa requires a focus not only on organized civil society, but also on the “morass of complex networks and arenas within which power dynamics are expressed and deployed” (Healey 2000:919). Drawing on this observation, I make a distinction between informal governance processes, which relate to the regulatory role of social networks, informal institutions, and popular associations, and formal governance processes, which involve the role of formal political, economic, and social institutions. The objective of this article is to explore the actual mechanisms through which informal governance processes link up with formal governance structures at the local level. By examining these processes from below, I aim to challenge idealized notions of the transformative capacities of popular agency in translating political decentralization into pro-poor governance outcomes, particularly under the harsh conditions of contemporary economic reforms.

The impact of popular networks and associations on urban governance will be explored in the context of three dynamic enterprise clusters in two different regions of Nigeria. The first is a weaving cluster in the city of Ilorin, located in the Yoruba Muslim area of western Nigeria. The other two are a shoe and a garment cluster in the city of Aba, in the Igbo Christian area of eastern Nigeria. Both cities constitute regional commercial centers with populations of around one million inhabitants, and the three study clusters are noted for their economic dynamism, involving rapid expansion, innovation, and globalization in the aftermath of Nigeria’s Structural Adjustment Programme.<sup>2</sup> As such, they represent “best case” scenarios of popular governance, in which social networks and informal institutions have supported dynamic livelihood strategies and strong, socially embedded popular associations. At the same time, these enterprise clusters offer useful contrasts, involving distinctive migration histories, differing patterns of ethnic, religious, class and gender relations, and different political relations with the local government. Despite the contrasting characteristics of these three informal enterprise clusters, they all reveal a similar trajectory

defined by the proliferation and fragmentation of popular networking and associational strategies in the wake of economic and political restructuring, in ways that have tended to undermine rather than strengthen collective action, popular empowerment, and civil order. A closer look at the institutional dynamics of these popular governance failures draws attention to the importance of distinguishing between the *economic* capacity of informal networks and institutions to organize livelihoods and makeshift services behind the scenes, and their *political* capacity to influence governance outcomes at the formal institutional level (see Prag 2010).

The information presented here is based on fieldwork conducted in 1999–2000 and 2004, with return visits in 2005 and 2007. Baseline data on the clusters was collected through a census of each cluster, a survey of 173 firm heads across the three clusters (selected in a statistically representative manner), and in-depth interviews and case histories of a further thirty firm heads, as well as interviews with leaders of occupational associations and officials from local government and relevant formal private sector associations.

### **Theoretical Approaches to Informal Governance: Social Capital, Social Liabilities, and Political Process**

Theoretical approaches to informal governance processes have evolved rapidly over the past two decades as academics and policymakers struggle to grasp the implications of liberalization and receding states for economic and political organization. Concepts such as social networks, social capital, embeddedness, civil society, and informal institutions have come into prominence amid efforts to conceptualize informal or “non-state” governance processes, with varying success.<sup>3</sup> While these concepts have helped to theorize popular forms of resource mobilization and political organization, they often fail to explain how such informal forms of organization shape political outcomes. The missing link, as Jo Beall (2001) points out in her work on poverty and urban governance, revolves around the question of how issues of power influence the dynamics of informal organization, and their impact on wider processes of governance.

Conventional notions of “social capital” represent effective informal governance as simply a function of social “connectivity,” which is said to foster trust and popular political and economic agency. Putnam (1993b:167) claims that “social capital itself enhances the effectiveness of government action,” creating a framework for social cohesion and participatory governance. This view has been adopted by a number of commentators on Third World cities who argue that the proliferation of popular organizational arrangements in times of economic stress and state withdrawal provide “new institutional frameworks” for service provision and citizen participation.<sup>4</sup> Concerns about the threat of economic hardship to popular empowerment are expressed in terms of its potential to erode rather than create social ties (Moser 1996).

A contrasting perspective suggests that there is more to popular empowerment than social connectivity. AbdouMaliq Simone (2001, 2004) and Ilda Lourenco-Lindell (2002, 2002) have demonstrated that the proliferation of popular networks in a context of economic pressure and weak formal institutions can warp and undermine the political agency of the poor. While Simone emphasizes the tendency of economic stress to intensify opportunism, Lourenco-Lindell reveals how the “politics of resource mobilization” within popular networks undermines the ability of the poorest and weakest members of society to enforce claims within the networks to which they belong, although she adds that “whether participation in such networks counters exposure and increases the potential for coping and recovering have to be tested empirically (2001:32).” On a more political level, Mark Granovetter (1983) argues that the embeddedness of the poor in horizontal networks of strong ties may isolate them from the kinds of networks capable of influencing policy.

The recognition that informal resource mobilization and associational life do not necessarily translate into popular empowerment has encouraged greater attention to issues of power relations as distinct from organizational capacity. In his excellent work on market women’s associations in Benin Republic, Ebbe Prag (2010:81) notes that assessing the institutional strength of popular networks requires “emphasizing not only economic capacities but also the political capacities of the associations and leaders to influence the market, work and living conditions.” Research on the political capacity of the African urban poor expresses increasing skepticism about the contribution of informal networks and associations to pro-poor governance. Perspectives “from below” reveal that, whatever their economic efficiency, the poor are hampered by poverty and insecurity in their efforts to form politically effective associations. Social marginalization and livelihood pressures often leave the associations of the poor vulnerable to opportunism or political capture by public officials, NGOs, or even by their own leadership.<sup>5</sup> Perspectives “from above” show that weak formal institutions in Third World cities further undermine conditions for effective public action among the urban poor. Commentators have shown that the decentralization of public authority is often hasty and poorly institutionalized, leaving municipal and local governments weak, disorganized, inadequately trained and staffed, and often underresourced relative to the new range of responsibilities they are expected to take on (see Devas 2001; Benton 1992). Moreover, “city governments are often not responsible for many of the services on which the poor depend: land allocation, housing, water supply, policing, education and health services” (Devas 2001:399).

The result is that, in the face of popular desperation and weak formal institutions at the local level, the shift toward more decentralized and participatory governance in many Third World cities has tended to perpetuate clientel forms of engagement rather than promoting democratic or “pro-poor” transformation. Extreme economic stress and weak associations tend

to encourage popular actors to opt for cliental deals rather than collective action, while local authorities tend to favor patrimonial forms of engagement, which minimize demands on resources and political accountability. In the context of informal enterprise, decentralization under such conditions does not lead to the political empowerment of the poor, but to an antidevelopmental dynamic referred to by Judith Tandler (2002) as “the devil’s deal”—a political dynamic of dependence and capture rather than pro-poor governance.

The empirical cases that follow reveal that even well-established and dynamic livelihood networks and associations have tended to follow a trajectory of disempowerment rather than fostering collective action and political empowerment. This challenges assertions about the ability of neoliberal economic and political reforms to foster popular empowerment and curb the venality of distant and corrupt centralized states in African countries.<sup>6</sup> The assumption that decentralization will promote democracy and local participation by “bringing the state closer to the people” is based on abstract notions that local governments are more easily held accountable by active popular forces (World Bank 1997, 2000). In the Nigerian case, however, rapid decentralization amid crushing economic reforms has undermined rather than unleashed the capacity of active popular organizations to foster pro-poor governance. Drastic change and limited political experience have severely limited the capacity of Nigerian informal entrepreneurs to turn dense local as well as global social capital into a basis of empowerment. The heart of the problem, as I will show, has less to do with a lack of social capital to mobilize people and resources across social cleavages, than with a lack of political capacity to make connections work in favor of the poor.

### **Popular Governance and Political Marginality in Three Enterprise Clusters**

In a country famous for its high levels of urbanization and for the dynamism of its livelihood networks and associational life, the Nigerian enterprise clusters of Ilorin and Aba stand out as particularly impressive cases. Comprising very small firms, averaging from two to seven workers, all three of the clusters examined here—the Ilorin weaving cluster and the Aba shoe and garment clusters—have made use of indigenous ethnic and religious institutions to generate expanding employment, enterprise development, and globalizing production and distribution networks in the face of state neglect and crumbling infrastructure. In addition to strong enterprise networks, producers are embedded in dense webs of associational life involving neighborhood and hometown associations, local political associations, social clubs, religious societies, and cluster associations, which provide mechanisms for influencing local decision-making structures. But while these popular economic and political networks have expanded since the

implementation of Nigeria's Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP) in 1986, their capacity to promote pro-poor development has declined. Contrary to social capitalist expectations, the proliferation of livelihood networks and associations in a context of severe economic hardship and weak local government structures has fragmented collective action and exacerbated problems of poverty, clientelism, and social conflict.

As I have detailed elsewhere (Meagher 2005, 2007b), the problem does not lie in ethnic divisions or other organizational deficiencies of African social networks, as often suggested by leading commentators on social networks, civil society, and the contemporary African malaise (e.g., Bayart et al. 1999; Castells 1998; Chabal & Daloz 1999). In fact, these three Nigerian clusters reveal a capacity to use ethnic and religious networks to build ties across social cleavages in the interest of economic expansion, despite very different social and economic histories. The Ilorin weaving cluster involves an indigenous activity that emerged in a Muslim Yoruba urban center a century before colonialism. The Aba shoe and garment clusters are both migrant activities developed in the colonial period in towns founded by the colonial administration in the Igbo Christian area of Nigeria.

The Ilorin weaving cluster is considered the preserve of indigenes of the city, although weavers originally came from a range of ethnic backgrounds, including Yoruba, Nupe, Fulani, and Hausa, who were fused into an Ilorin Yoruba identity during the precolonial era (see Meagher 2007; O'Hear 1987). The weaving cluster has survived and even expanded amid the radical economic and political changes of colonialism and independence. An unmechanized, traditionally male activity, the weaving of Ilorin cloth (*aso-oke*) is organized through Yoruba institutions of apprenticeship, production, and credit networks, under the authority of a weavers' guild, which remains the main weavers' association in the city.<sup>7</sup> Although weaving remains associated with backwardness and a lack of Western education, the elegance and high status of Ilorin cloth has led to rising demand since colonialism, making weaving an important source of employment, accumulation, and social advancement. A period of expansion since the 1970s has drawn in labor from surrounding non-Yoruba and non-Muslim communities, as well as incorporating women into the traditionally male activity of narrow loom weaving.

By contrast, the Aba shoe and garment clusters emerged in the late colonial period, and involve "modern" rather than traditional activities—the making of Western shoes and clothes. Aba itself is a colonial city founded in the early 1900s as an administrative center and trading entrepôt in an area with no prior history of large-scale urbanization (see Forrest 1994; Martin 1988). The Aba garment cluster was founded by migrants from the relatively prosperous Bende communities of eastern Igboland, while the artisanal shoe cluster was pioneered by migrants from the poor, land-hungry community of Mbaise in central Igboland. Despite the emergence of an overarching Igbo ethnicity during the colonial period, both communities

are still regarded as migrants in Aba, which is located in the territory of the Ngwa community of southern Igboland. The organization and cohesion of these clusters are based on a range of shared indigenous institutions, including the system of hometown-based occupational specialization, the remarkably effective Igbo apprenticeship system, and intercommunal credit systems and trading networks.<sup>8</sup> These indigenous economic institutions underpin the tendency of Igbo hometown communities to specialize in particular lines of trade or small-scale production, even when members migrate to urban centers.

Although they are linked by shared cultural institutions, the Aba shoe and garment clusters have been shaped by contrasting socioeconomic histories (see Meagher 2006). On the one hand, small-scale garment production is a mechanized activity, involving comparatively high capital costs and educational requirements. Migrants from old Bende communities dominate the activity owing to their advantaged access to capital and education, rather than through any precolonial expertise in the production or trading of textiles. As distinct from Ilorin weaving, small-scale garment production in particular allows for a high participation of women because of the convention of women sewing for women and men sewing for men. By contrast, Aba's small-scale shoe production is an unmechanized activity, and was initially relatively unskilled. Like Bende migrants, Mbaise shoe producers had no indigenous history of shoe production or leatherworking. Resource-strapped Mbaise migrants turned to small-scale shoe production because of its extremely low capital and skill threshold, and the activity continues to be regarded in Aba as a "poor man's business." Over time, however, skills, equipment, and materials have become more sophisticated, leading to the production of contemporary "fashion shoes." With respect to the role of gender, informal shoe production has remained an almost exclusively male activity, due to its low status and the physically arduous character of the activity. Both clusters have expanded gradually since the 1970s, drawing in entrants from a growing range of Igbo and even non-Igbo communities.

Despite their extremely varied histories, all three clusters have responded dynamically to the pressures and opportunities of economic crisis and restructuring. From the late 1970s, the formal economy was wracked by falling oil prices and severe structural imbalances, followed by sweeping structural reforms. Between 1985 and 2005 the Nigerian currency lost more than 99 percent of its value, the urban consumer price index rose, on average, over 160 percent per year, and extensive public and private sector retrenchment created massive unemployment (Central Bank of Nigeria 1999; International Monetary Fund 2000). These economic reforms devastated the formal manufacturing sector, where capacity utilization fell from 70 percent in 1980 to 41 percent in 2002, and formal manufacturing growth declined by over 2 percent per year from 1991 to 1999 (Adebiji & Babatope-Obasa 2004:2). Yet, over the same period, all three of these small-enterprise clusters generated expanding levels of employment, income,



**Table 1: Employment and Turnover at the Turn of the Millennium**

Cluster	No. of Firms	Total Employment	Annual Turnover (US\$ mil.)	Percent Occupational Specialization
Ilorin Weaving	529*	10,374**	12.2**	69.2*
Aba Garments***	2,423	12,115	29.8	72.9
Aba Shoes***	11,497	46,053	179.3	85.5

\* Data from 2004.

\*\* Data refer to peak production levels in early 1990s of firms operating in 2004

\*\*\* Data are for the 1999–2000 production season.

Source: Fieldwork

and consumer goods. During the 1990s the Ilorin weaving cluster was estimated to have directly employed more than ten thousand people, not to mention those involved in the trade in inputs and finished cloth. At its peak in the early 1990s, the weaving cluster had a turnover of over \$US12 million annually.<sup>9</sup> Even more impressive, the Aba shoe and garment clusters together generated employment for more than fifty-eight thousand people, with a combined annual turnover of over US\$200 million (see table 1).

Nor were these clusters confined to purely local circuits of production and trade, despite being composed of extremely small firms. Expanding demand from structurally adjusted consumers across Africa, combined with trade liberalization and links with well-developed ethnic trading networks, has linked these small firms into increasingly global circuits of supply and distribution. As indicated in table 2, the majority of weavers and shoe producers, and one-sixth of garment producers, supply markets in other African countries through business relations with traders from a range of Nigerian as well as non-Nigerian ethnic groups. Over 60 percent of weavers supply markets in Europe and North America as well, thanks to new patterns of demand generated by a growing West African diaspora. All three clusters also enjoy impressively high levels of subcontracting to the formal sector, ranging from over 80 percent of Ilorin weavers to 26 percent of Aba shoe producers. Cross-ethnic and formal sector linkages are facilitated by the pervasive use of business cards and more recently by mobile phone contacts, even among these microenterprises. Manuel Castell's (1998) notion that African societies are condemned to marginalization owing to state decay and networks that are not "switched on" seems misplaced in the context of these expanding, globalized, mobile phone-wielding enterprise networks.

Overall, these clusters demonstrate a remarkable level of social integration, resource mobilization, and interaction with the formal economy, all

**Table 2: Marketing Networks (% of Firms)**

Cluster	Main Market Outside Town	Distribution to Other African Countries	Distribution to Europe/ North America	Subcontract to Formal Sector	Use Business Card
Ilorin Weaving	98.1	86.5	63.5	84.6	80.8
Aba Garments	39.0	16.4	1.6	36.1	49.2
Aba Shoes	98.0	74.6	2.8	25.4	26.8

Source: Fieldwork

based on popular ethnic, religious, and economic networks. Their capacity for livelihood generation and employment provision is all the more impressive when it is recognized that the enterprises remain largely informal. Eighty percent of garment firms and virtually all of the weaving and shoe firms are unregistered, and all of them evade most state and federal taxes, although they pay local government taxes because of the existence of physical tax patrols at the local level (see Meagher 2010). Yet this wealth of social capital, and routine participation in the local government tax net, has not succeeded in fostering more effective and participatory urban governance in the wake of economic restructuring and political decentralization. Indeed, the reverse has occurred. The pressures of structural reforms have weakened rather than strengthened collective action in the service of popular livelihoods, leading to increasing opportunism, ethnic and religious polarization, and a growing vulnerability to elite capture.

### Economic Stress and Network Fragmentation

The impression of popular economic dynamism created by the remarkable growth of these Nigerian enterprise clusters masks growing social and economic stress on popular organizational capacities. Rapid expansion in the context of economic restructuring has fragmented rather than strengthened networking strategies among the urban poor. High unemployment, falling real incomes, and intense livelihood pressures have triggered a flood of entry into the small- and micro-enterprise sector from a growing range of social groups. In the case of the Ilorin weaving cluster, more than half of existing enterprises have started up since the onset of structural adjustment, while in the two Aba clusters, postadjustment entrants represent more than 80 percent of producers. Not only has this generated unprecedented levels of competition among firms, but it has also precipitated a rapid social restructuring of informal business networks in all three clusters, unleashing new tensions of identity, generation, class, and gender.

Table 3 indicates the main trends in social restructuring within these small-enterprise clusters, which were originally dominated by producers

**Table 3: Changing Social Profiles of Enterprise Clusters after Structural Adjustment**

Enterprise Cluster	% Firm Heads from Original Communities	% Firm Heads 30 Years of Age or Younger	% Firm Heads from Advantaged Backgrounds	% Firm Heads with Secondary Education	% Female Firm Heads
Ilorin Weaving	100	17.3	30.8	38.4	0.0
Aba Garment	44.3	39.0	26.3	65.5	44.3
Aba Shoe	14.1	49.3	18.5	12.7	0.0

\* One-third of weavers no longer knew their ethnic origins, and even those of non-Yoruba origins had become Ilorin indigenes.

Source: Fieldwork

who lacked the resources and education to gain access to jobs in the “modern” sector. With regard to communal composition, the dominance of Ilorin indigenes was preserved in the weaving cluster because of the location of the activity in the “traditional quarters” of the town. In the Aba clusters, however, the influx of new actors brought a significant penetration of other Igbo as well as non-Igbo groups. While the integration of other communities began well before structural adjustment, it accelerated markedly from the onset of adjustment, reducing the strength of the founding hometown communities in Aba to less than half of firms. There were also marked shifts in the generational composition of firm heads, as single and often poorly capitalized young men under thirty became a force to be reckoned with, often challenging occupational norms of quality and price regulation in their haste to get ahead. Economic restructuring also triggered a rapid rise in educated and middle-class entrants as retrenched or underpaid civil servants, formal sector workers, and unemployed graduates flooded into these informal manufacturing activities. By the early 2000s, more than one-third of weavers and 65 percent of garment producers had secondary education or better, and 13 percent and 7 percent, respectively, had some postsecondary education. Even in a low-status business like informal shoe production, more than 10 percent of producers had secondary school certificates. Even more striking was the rise in producers from more privileged commercial or formal sector backgrounds. Nearly one-third of weavers and one-quarter of garment producers hailed from these more advantaged economic backgrounds, along with nearly 20 percent of shoe producers.

Gender was the only aspect of the social composition of clusters that did not change significantly. Women remained excluded as firm heads in both the weaving and the shoe clusters, although there was limited penetration of women into both clusters as labor. Similarly, women continued to make up about half of firm heads in the garment cluster, although there was some incursion of men into the sewing of women’s clothes at the lucra-

**Table 4: Patterns of Associational Participation**

Cluster	Avg. No. of Voluntary Associations Joined	Cluster-based Producers' Association (% of Heads)	Hometown or Local Area Associations (% of Heads)	Religious Associations (% of Heads)	Social Clubs (% of Heads)
Ilorin Weaving	2.3	90.4	38.4	46.1	5.8
Aba Garment	3.0	6.6	63.9	85.2	9.8
Aba Shoe	4.2	83.1	81.7	77.5	18.0

Source: Fieldwork

tive high fashion end of the business. These observations suggest limits to the notion that popular livelihood networks improve economic opportunities for women.

While many of these changes may look like a trend toward greater inclusiveness and increased access to skills and resources within the clusters, the effect was to erode rather than enhance collective enterprise networks. Greater communal, generational, and class diversity, combined with rapid entry under intense livelihood pressure, tended to overwhelm embedded regulatory structures and weaken institutions of apprenticeship, credit, and communal as well as cluster-based sanctions against opportunistic behavior. Instead of creating a denser and more inclusive social fabric, these processes of social restructuring unleashed processes of differentiation that undermined more broad-based occupational forms of collective organization within the clusters.

At the level of informal business networks, rapid entry from a more diverse range of social and economic groups weakened informal occupational institutions. Faced with overburdened structures of community-based regulation and collapsing credit networks, producers shifted to more individual forms of networking to shore up their business networks. They began turning to personal ties of community, religious affiliation, friendship, or former school membership to cobble together individual networks of supply, labor, credit, and marketing opportunities. Enterprise networks were increasingly defined by an individual's portfolio of ties, rather than by collective arrangements at the cluster level, fueling new processes of differentiation and network fragmentation. More educated producers or those with advantaged class backgrounds could develop new credit or marketing networks by linking up with influential relatives or friends in formal sector firms, while less advantaged producers were increasingly confined to unstable networks of poor relations, friends, and members of their church or mosque in their efforts to mobilize customers, labor, or loans.

High levels of associational participation among producers in all three clusters have not eased processes of popular organizational fragmentation. Both Yoruba and Igbo society are characterized by high levels of participa-

tion in hometown associations and other types of popular organizations. Producers in the Ilorin weaving cluster belonged to an average of 2.3 associations, with such affiliations rising to an average of 3.0 in the garment cluster and 4.2 in the shoe cluster. While religious and local area associations (including hometown unions among the Igbo and ward and lineage association among Ilorin weavers) predominated, producers also participated in a range of social clubs, political associations, and rotating credit societies. Far from creating a dense “web of associational life,” however, individualized livelihood networks and participation in popular associations coalesced into divergent types of networks rather than producing a dense fabric of collective mobilization. In the interplay of personal ties and associational participation, four distinctive types of networks emerged, each fostering very different forms of economic and political engagement. These networks can be described as “patrimonialist,” “modernist,” “diversification,” and “desperation” (Meagher 2010). The first two represent paths of accumulation, while the last two are survival strategies.

Patrimonialist networks involved established producers and entrants from advantaged class backgrounds, who tended to follow a strategy of integration into established cliental networks through significant investment in resources and time. In the weaving cluster, linking into the establishment involved participation in the traditional weavers’ guild, known as *Tawakalitu* (Arabic: I stand with God), which was the central channel of patrimonial engagement between Ilorin weavers and the local, state, and federal governments. In the shoe and garment clusters, patrimonialist networks revolved around participation in one’s hometown association, which tended to fragment occupational interests, given the growing range of Igbo groups that had entered these activities. In all three cases, patrimonial strategies appealed to producers with sufficient resources and social status to work the system, while women, youth, and those from less advantaged class backgrounds were marginalized.

While established and middle-class producers used networks and associations to embed themselves in the patrimonial system, more skilled producers from disadvantaged class backgrounds tended to opt for a contrary strategy of disembedding themselves from local patrimonial networks. Modernist producers revealed a decisive shift from cliental forms of engagement to networks that reward skills and hard work rather than wealth and social status. In the Ilorin weaving cluster, modernists were associated with non-participation in the traditional weavers’ guild. Instead, they tended to join alternative weavers’ associations geared to the concerns of more skilled or educated producers—the most influential of which is *Oluhunkunmi* (Yoruba: God is with me)—or to participate in the *Tijaniyya* brotherhood or the *Ansarudeen* Islamic society—both groups with a strong work ethic and educational orientation. In the Aba clusters, a modernist strategy involved rejecting participation in one’s hometown association in favor of conversion to exclusivist Pentecostal religious societies, such as *Deeper Life* or *Jeho-*

vah's Witness. In all three cases, modernists effectively followed a Weberian strategy of frugality, skill development, and hard work, often articulated through conversion to nonorthodox religious movements. These strategies represented a rejection of cliental engagement by producers who lacked the wealth and status to advance through collaboration with patrimonial interests but had the skills to prosper through innovation and enterprise investment.

The third form of networking—diversification—is a coping strategy rather than a strategy of accumulation. Reminiscent of the dynamic described by Sara Berry (1993) in her article “Coping with Confusion,” diversification strategies represented an attempt to multiply rather than focus networks in order to maximize access to sources of income and assistance. Among shoe and garment producers, diversification was associated with participation in hometown associations as well as in Pentecostal religious societies and/or social clubs. Among Ilorin weavers, where neither Pentecostalism nor drinking are acceptable options, diversification involves participation in political associations and various types of Islamic societies along with membership in a weavers' association. Successful weavers tend to regard membership in political associations as a sign of failure, since the incentive for joining is to look for crumbs from the state rather than earning a dignified living through weaving. One weaver described joining a political party as “just another form of diversification” beyond weaving, on a par with driving a motorcycle taxi or trading on the side. Among diversifiers, “connectivity” by any means is the order of the day, but such thinly spread resources were associated with a lack of accumulation and enterprise growth.

The final strategy, “desperation,” involved clinging to a few ascriptive and friendship networks owing to a lack of resources to diversify and a lack of skills or social status to chart a course of accumulation. Membership in associations was minimal, because of a lack of time and resources for effective participation. Producers were simply obliged to make do with the unreliable and intermittent connections available to them.

To illustrate these different paths, the following are two examples of the patrimonial networking strategy:

*Chief M., an established shoe producer of Mbaïse origins, has only primary school education, but he comes from a trading background and his father is a village chief. He belongs to both his village and his hometown unions, a Catholic Church association, an Mbaïse shoemakers' association, and a savings club. His embeddedness in the communal and religious establishment of his home area has provided access to useful resources and contacts. However, in his enterprise networks, he avoids interaction with relatives and townsmen, preferring to recruit workers and organize supply and marketing contacts through pure business relationships. He claims that the concentration of Mbaïse producers in shoe production is a disadvantage, since it exposes him to too many demands for assistance from struggling townsmen.*

*Alfa K. is a weaver, koranic teacher, and post-secondary school graduate, and his father is a weaver, koranic teacher, and civil servant. His koranic students often double as weaving trainees, providing a ready source of labor, and contacts with civil servants give him useful links with middle-class customers who buy Ilorin cloth for ceremonies and to trade overseas. He is an adherent of Quadiriyya, the brotherhood of the Nigerian Islamic establishment, and he is a member of the Tawakalitu weavers' association, though he uses his father's membership card. He does not bother joining political associations because he feels they are a waste of time.*

By contrast, modernist networks demonstrate a greater focus on skills and rejection of patrimonial forms of engagement:

*Alh. I is a weaver and koranic scholar with a secondary school education. His father was also a weaver. An innovative designer, Alh. I trades cloth to high quality boutiques in Lagos rather than to local customers or traditional weaving markets. In addition to employing local weavers, he employs women weavers from Okene, a neighboring non-Yoruba group. He is in his local ward association as a religious leader, and is a member of the main alternative weavers' association, Oluhunkunmi. He tried joining a political association in 1999 after the end of military rule, but left because there was no benefit in it. He said that politics is just another avenue for moving up through jobs and handouts, not a way to improve oneself as a weaver.*

*Mr. E is a shirt specialist in the Aba garment cluster. He has only a primary school education because of family hardship, but he did two apprenticeships to perfect his sewing skills, and is a member of Deeper Life Bible Church. Mr. E belongs to his church association only, refusing to join even his hometown union, which allows him to conserve his resources for investment in his sewing business. Mr. E obtains labor through business relations, selecting workers on the basis of skills and paying them above the going rate, and he has built up pure business contacts with traders and boutiques through an emphasis on quality and reliability. More educated producers in Deeper Life, such as the secondary-school educated shoe producer Bro. O, gain access to labor and business contact through the church rather than through the market, because education constitutes an important source of access and advancement. Bro. O sources skilled and reliable labor through Deeper Life contacts, and his longest standing customer is a Deeper Life member from Lagos, who has brought him considerable business and grants credit when needed. Bro. O is not a member of his hometown association and has formally withdrawn from the shoe producers' association, because he feels they are not helpful.*

As distinct from patrimonial or modernist strategies of accumulation, diversification strategies seek survival through a proliferation of networks in the context of weakening economic fortunes:

*Mr. U is a middle-aged garment producer who also does some trading on the side because his business is not doing well. Although his father was a civil servant, Mr. U did not complete his secondary education and went into tailoring. He produces only for individuals, although he used to get occasional orders from boutiques. Mr. U belongs to his village association, a church society, and to three social clubs. His customers and labor are recruited largely through friendship and tailoring networks rather than through communal or religious ties.*

*Alh. O is an aging weaver with no formal education whose family has been in the business for three generations. He tends to obtain workers and customers through family contacts. He has had a few large customers who trade to Lagos, but he has lost this business due to the market downturn. Alh. O is a member of his ward association, as well as a Quadiriyya prayer group, an alternative weavers' association, and a political association. He is somewhat ashamed of having joined the political group, and said that it is only the bad market that makes weavers join political associations, in the hope of getting small contracts or assistance.*

The most desperate survival strategies involve those who cannot even afford to diversify, as the following example shows:

*Miss C is a tailor from an informal trading background with a primary school education. Although she has been in the business for fifteen years, she has no workers, no regular suppliers, and no credit networks, and she depends largely on customers from her home village, who give her business in return for a lower price. To supplement her low income from tailoring, she also bakes cakes and sells old newspapers. She belongs to her village association and to her church group (Catholic), but says neither offers her any assistance because she lacks time to participate in them fully. She just participates for social reasons and in case of calamity.*

Because of the differing social histories of the three clusters, different network strategies have come to dominate processes of accumulation and authority in each cluster. In the weaving cluster and shoe cluster, patrimonial strategies represent the main path of accumulation, owing to the low status and comparatively low levels of education in these activities. In the shoe cluster, patrimonial strategies account for 16 percent of firms but generate 30 percent of the cluster's turnover. In the weaving cluster, which has been affected by a serious market downturn for over a decade, patrimonial strategies represent 9 percent of firms but control 16 percent of



**Table 5: Networks of Accumulation and Turnover Shares**

Cluster	Patrimonial Strategy: % of Firms	Patrimonial Strategy: % of Turnover	Disembedding Strategy: % of Firms	Disembedding Strategy: % of Turnover	Survival Strategies: % of Firms	Survival Strategies: % of Turnover
Ilorin Weaving	9	16	11	10	80	74
Aba Garment	8	4	8	31	84	65
Aba Shoe	16	30	9	4	75	66

Source: Fieldwork

the cluster's income. While modernist networks exist in both clusters, they have performed poorly, in both cases generating income shares below their share of firms. It is worth noting that modernist networks in the weaving cluster have gained considerable ground since the early 1990s, but they remain subordinate both economically and politically to patrimonial weaving networks.

By contrast, modernist networks dominate accumulation in the garment cluster, where mechanization and education have been central forces from the beginning. Male garment producers with disadvantaged class backgrounds who belong to exclusive Pentecostal religious groups account for 8 percent of firms but for 31 percent of the turnover in the cluster. Conversely, producers with advantaged class backgrounds who belong to their hometown association have performed poorly. In all three clusters, the majority of remaining producers are caught in unsuccessful accumulation and survival strategies that leave them with a disadvantageous income share.

The analysis of informal livelihood strategies shows that, rather than creating a dense network of associational life, the intense networking and associational activity evident in these enterprise clusters have given rise to an increasingly fragmented organizational terrain. Through distinctive strategies of accumulation and survival, the "politics of resource mobilization" (Lourenço-Lindell 2001) have fractured enterprise clusters into divergent networks shaped by differing patterns of identity, religion, class, generation, and gender. As Knorringa (1999:1593) points out in the context of the large Indian shoe cluster in Agra, differentiation into networks with distinctive social and class identities limits the tendency for gains to percolate down to weaker producers and for weaker producers to "graduate" to more successful production networks. It also limits prospects for collective action and associational activity that represents the interests of the majority of members. Understanding how the micropolitics of informal livelihood

networks influence wider processes of urban governance requires a closer look at how networks dominant within a given cluster shape the character of cluster associations and interaction with local officials and government structures.

### Cluster Associations and Collective Action

The most powerful networks within a cluster are key to shaping relations between enterprise clusters and urban governance institutions. As Haan (1999) and others have noted, African enterprise associations tend to be dominated by the most successful producers, meaning that networks of accumulation tend to define the politics of cluster associations. In the case of the three clusters examined here, the different social histories of the clusters have given rise to very different types of cluster associations, which relate to the state in distinctive ways. However, the effectiveness of popular organizations is influenced both by how they relate to the state and how the state relates to them. Martin Medina (1997) identifies four different ways in which the state interacts with popular forms of economic organization: these involve repression, neglect, collusion, and stimulation. The final form of interaction is also referred to as “synergy” by Peter Evans (1996). Tracing how these popular livelihood networks feed into urban governance outcomes thus involves a dual process of examining how enterprise networks shape the politics of cluster associations and how these associations are in turn shaped by the nature of the state.

All three of the Nigerian study clusters have well-established cluster associations. The main associations in these clusters are all more than ten years old (and in some cases much older), are well embedded in popular occupational structures, and provide a range of basic services such as dispute resolution, night guards within the cluster, and basic social welfare assistance, particularly in times of bereavement. Members pay dues, which are kept very low by the poverty of most informal producers, leaving associations unable to fund any real business services, such as credit or bulk input supply. In Aba associational leaders are more or less democratically elected, while in Ilorin they are selected on the basis of seniority and wealth in line with the Yoruba guild system. There are six main enterprise associations in the Aba shoe cluster, the oldest of which dates from the mid-1970s, and 83 percent of firms in the cluster belong to the association operating in their zone within the cluster. The associations come together under the umbrella of the shoe cluster in order to negotiate with government. However, the lowly social and economic status of informal shoe producers has limited the ability of this large and dynamic group of associations to engage politically with government through formal channels. While the shoe association leadership tends to hail from more privileged class backgrounds than the bulk of the shoe cluster, the leaders are dominated by producers from successful commercial rather than formal employment backgrounds, and

they remain constrained by comparatively low levels of education and the low social status of their activity. The dominance of patrimonial strategies of accumulation among the associational leadership has fostered relations with local and regional officials that are characterized by a tendency toward collusion and kickbacks rather than economic demands and representation of member interests. Tendencies toward collusion and the monopolization of benefits, combined with inadequate resources and organizational skills to assist this vast cluster of more than eleven thousand firms, have bred disillusionment and mistrust among the rank and file of shoe producers, who describe their associational leadership as “hungry lions.”

In the garment cluster only one association, which had started up in 1984, was in operation by the early 2000s. The strong modernist strategy of the relatively educated leadership, drawn from the most successful firms in the cluster, fostered efforts to engage with the state through formal rather than patrimonial channels. Despite the fact that from 1999 to 2007 the bulk of successful garment producers came from the same Igbo community as the state governor, the leadership of the garment association largely abstained from joining their hometown association and avoided patrimonial lobbying at the state house. Instead, the association forged links with the Nigerian Association of Small-Scale Industrialists (NASSI), assisted firms to register formally, and even took the government to court over a case of official harassment. While this strategy allowed the garment association to bypass negligent and corrupt local political forces, it threw a comparatively small and weak group of microproducers into the formal political arena of the Nigerian central government, where their lower-class backgrounds, small enterprise incomes, and refusal to “work the system” left them severely handicapped despite their education and relative economic success. Moreover, the professional orientation of the garment cluster alienated them even from their own constituency. Only 7 percent of those in the garment cluster were members of the association, owing to a pervasive clash between the survivalist orientation of the majority and the modernizing orientation of the association leadership.

The Ilorin weaving cluster is dominated by a weavers’ guild that has existed since precolonial times and still enjoys the membership of 75 percent of weavers. As in the Aba shoe cluster, the dominance of patrimonial strategies of accumulation, combined with low levels of education, particularly among the elderly associational leadership, has confined this association to clientel forms of engagement with the state that revolve around tax exemptions, handouts to the associational leadership at election time, and official initiatives relating to the arts and cultural displays rather than much needed enterprise and export assistance. Interestingly, tensions with the increasingly educated and innovative modernist weavers split the association in the early 1990s, giving rise to a new weavers’ association, Oluhunkunmi, which pursues an anticliental strategy of bypassing local and regional government channels and attempting to solicit enterprise assistance from federal government

sources. So far they have had little success in getting the federal government to take them seriously because of educational handicaps and the low-status, unmechanized character of their activity.

From the other side of the governance equation, the nature of state engagement with enterprise clusters and their associations does not appear likely to improve prospects for pro-poor governance. A spate of governance reforms since the 1990s has done little to increase popular empowerment or official accountability. Significant decentralization of authority, service provision, and taxation to local government has been accompanied by an enormous increase in revenue allocation from the federal government, with the result that petrol resources from the center continue to account for over 90 percent of local government finances (see Wunsch & Olowu 1997). In Ilorin, the local and state governments exempt weavers from many taxes as a concession to “indigeneity,” which helps to maintain political support despite a lack of services. In Aba, local governments have taken full advantage of increased taxation powers, imposing such a dizzying range of new taxes that paying additional “bogus” taxes has become as big a problem among informal producers as tax evasion is. In both cities, however, the overwhelming significance of oil revenues as a source of local government revenue has reduced local revenue collection from informal producers to pocket change for local officials. These imbalances in revenue sources, combined with rapidly changing and poorly institutionalized local government structures and an environment of pervasive corruption, have left local officials less rather than more inclined to engage with the demands of the urban poor. Far from being reined in by these active but politically weak associations, Nigerian local and regional governments oscillate between ignoring them and using them to mobilize electoral support or dubious revenue collection arrangements. In terms of Medina’s typology, the Nigerian state’s relation with these local associations lies somewhere between neglect and collusion.

Mounting demands from all three enterprise clusters for improvements in the deplorable state of the infrastructure, whereby roads are impassable during the rainy season, electricity is absent or sporadic, and mounting insecurity threatens popular livelihoods, have fallen on deaf ears. Growing calls for basic enterprise support, such as legal backing for associational quality control efforts or information and assistance with export procedures to address problems of declining markets, have also been ignored. The result has been a descent of all three clusters into a state of economic crisis and decline over the past five to ten years, owing to economic instability, rapid entry, collapsing infrastructure, and intensifying competition from liberalized as well as smuggled Asian imports. The problem is not one of unrealistic expectations of receiving state handouts, but of the fundamental needs of all small enterprise for basic infrastructure and institutional support in order to coordinate activities that cross not only local, but also national, boundaries.

In the face of state neglect, neither patrimonial nor modernist strategies of associational engagement have brought about any improvements in the clusters' access to even the most basic urban and business services. The social and often legal marginality of the groups involved, and the increasing fragmentation of cluster networks and associations, has continued to undermine their ability to influence political decision-making, whether through patrimonial or more formal channels. At the same time, poverty and network fragmentation have increased tendencies toward ethnic and religious polarization within the clusters, and intensified the vulnerability of cluster associations to mobilization in the service of more powerful political interests. The Ilorin weaving cluster remains caught in struggles between an ineffective patrimonialist association and a more dynamic but less influential modernist association. According to executives of Tawakalitu (personal interviews, July 2010), neither of the weavers' associations has the political connections to get the local or state government to attend to the institutional needs of weavers, though local officials keep the dominant weavers' association on their side by giving small supply and construction contracts to members of the executive. In Aba, the struggles of the garment associations for increased access to resources and services led to its collapse in 2007 due to the disruptive influence of an international NGO trying to use it for the implementation of an informal sector program. A more opportunistic and less embedded tailors' association has been gaining ground by using coercive methods to extract payments from tailors and attempting to sell its tax collection services to the state government. In both the weaving and garment clusters, the failure to gain the ear of the state for collective economic interests has led to mounting enterprise failure, with young men hemorrhaging out of the clusters to swell the chaotic and volatile ranks of hawkers, motorcycle taxi drivers, and the unemployed.

In the Aba shoe cluster, enterprise associations are best known for responding to severe local insecurity by means of a vigilante group known as the Bakassi Boys to protect local property rights and make the town safe for visiting buyers. While the shoe cluster was of little interest to local officials, the vigilante group was seen as a valuable resource, and was hijacked by Igbo state governors to be used as a political hit-squad during the run-up to Nigeria's 2003 elections, lingering on until today as a clandestine force for political disruption and reprisals amid escalating insecurity in Abia State.<sup>10</sup> Instead of contributing to pro-poor governance, efforts at popular organization in all three clusters have tended to exacerbate a situation of poverty, patrimonial capture, and political ungovernance.

### **Conclusion: Beyond the Devil's Deal**

This examination of the micropolitics of popular livelihood networks raises questions about the capacity of social capital to foster popular empowerment and pro-poor governance in urban Africa. A "best case" scenario of

dynamic Nigerian enterprise clusters reveals that it takes more than dense webs of social networks to create a framework for collective action, and it takes more than political decentralization to generate synergistic structures of urban governance. The three Nigerian enterprise clusters tick all the boxes of dynamic social capital—dense and increasingly globalized popular livelihood networks; the ability to build ties across ethnic, religious, and class cleavages; participation in a range of voluntary associations; active enterprise associations—and yet none of these clusters has been able to promote governance outcomes that respond to popular livelihood needs, despite significant devolution of government powers and responsibilities to the local level. It is not only lack of organizational linkages that constrains the political voice of the poor, but also, as these Nigerian cases show, a lack of social and economic power to make connections work in favor of popular interests. The same networks of identity, class, religion, and gender that the poor use to construct livelihood networks and popular associations tie them to relations of dependence and subordination in the formal political arena.

The problem cannot be pinned on the imperviousness of a massively corrupt Nigerian state to the pressures of insignificant informal entrepreneurs. The core argument behind political decentralization was that greater proximity to the people and dense civil organization would rein in the corruption and impunity of the state at the local level. At over 60 percent of the nonagricultural labor force in Nigeria, informal actors make up a significant share of urban civil society. If these highly organized and efficient enterprise networks are unable to improve local political accountability, then the argument behind decentralization needs to be reexamined. Nor does the problem lie in the failure of the tax relationship between the state and informal enterprise. Despite their informality, these small entrepreneurs pay their local government taxes and even some state-level taxes, but they continue to receive little in the way of basic services in return. Even if informal firms paid all of their taxes, the amount of revenue generated by a large but poor informal economy would amount to little more than pocket change relative to the huge petro-dollar subventions from the federal account. The result is that neither decentralization, nor social capital, nor strength of numbers, nor even taxation gives these informal enterprise clusters any leverage to hold public officials to account, even at the local level. Shifting control of petroleum resources away from the Nigerian government would not help matters—it would only move resources farther from the reach of popular accountability.

Fortunately, this scenario of state neglect and capture is not the only possible outcome. Research on relations between informal economies and the state indicates a range of possible governance outcomes depending on how informal institutional dynamics are shaped by the nature of the state. The outcome of neglect or collusion described here is common in many parts of Africa, but more synergistic outcomes have also been docu-

mented in Senegal, Benin, and Somaliland, where informal actors control more strategic resources and are embedded in networks that link them to more powerful actors at various levels of the formal economy and the state. As Ebbe Prag (2010) notes in his insightful account of market women's organizations in Benin, political agency is as dependent on the political leverage created by wider ties to trade unions, central government officials, and international organizations as it is on the ability to mobilize collective action at the popular level (see also Renders 2008; Villalon 1995).

The secret, then, is not more decentralization and denser popular networks, but strengthened ties between popular organizations and supportive elements at higher levels of government and society. Research on building political voice within the informal economy argues that the way forward lies not only in creating networks and associations in order to facilitate participation in local governance structures, but in actually empowering those associations to make effective claims on government. This involves shifting away from the disabling institutional environment of rapid liberalization and informalization which has tended to weaken the organizational and representative capacities of popular organizations. It also requires nurturing alliances with more powerful organizations capable of defending informal economic interests within the formal political arena.<sup>11</sup> Particularly where the state is resistant to prioritizing the needs of the urban poor, strong allies are needed to give the voice of informal actors a measure of political clout. In the context of urban Africa, fostering pro-poor governance demands a greater focus on how power as well as sociability shapes the political agency of the poor.

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## Notes

1. See Hansen and Vaa (2004); Tripp (1997); Davis (2006); Simone (2004a).
2. See Forrest (1994); Meagher (2007b); O'Hear (1987).
3. See Castells (1998); Fukuyama (1995); North (1990); Putnam (1993a).
4. See Hansen and Vaa (2004); Simone (2004b); Tati (2001); Tripp (1997).
5. See Thulare (2004); Beall (2001); Mitlin (2001).
6. See Larson and Soto (2008); Ribot (2007).
7. Women also weave in Ilorin, but they have traditionally been involved in broad loom weaving, which never became commercially significant, rather than in the narrow loom weaving associated with Ilorin cloth.
8. See Isichei (1976); Northrup (1978); Silverstein (1983); Meagher (2010). Among the Igbo, hometown identities are based on one's community of origin, rather than of birth or residence, and are reflected in differences in the dialect of Igbo spoken, which vary quite widely.
9. Figures presented here reflect peak production levels in the early 1990s of firms still operating in 2004. All other data on weaving firms reflect the current situation in 2004.
10. See Meagher (2007a); Ukiwo (2002); Human Rights Watch (2002).
11. See Horn (2003); ILO (2002); Lindell (2010).