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BIO: Archimedes Muzenda is an urban planning scholar and graduate student with research focus on African Urbanisation. He has extensively published in issues of African urbanisation and sustainability as well as speaking at various conferences in the same research focus specialising in African urbanisation process and application of urban planning models to transitional cities.

THEME: Social economy and transition to sustainable development

TITLE: Post 2015, the Unfinished Business: Towards leapfrogged agenda-setting

Abstract

In the contemporary global development spectrum, agenda setting has been critical in setting the path to be taken by development players. While there has been several and remarkable agendas that has been set at a global scale development in the realm of poverty eradication and environmental sustainability remains lagging behind. Using the critical millennium development goals 2014 this paper charts the trajectories taken by the global development spectrum in the analytical lenses of agenda setting. It highlights that since the beginning of agenda setting in the global development spectrum, the agenda setters have been lagging behind failing to achieve the set agenda at the detriment of continued environmental loss and exacerbated poverty ravages.

The paper highlights that the post 2015 era is characterised by efforts to complete the unfinished business a clear indication of lagging behind of the implementation part of the agenda setting. It notes that regardless of the resources committed by the international organisations in setting the development agenda, monitoring and evaluation of those agendas such as the MDG2014 there is always a gap in the fulfilment of the agendas on a global spectrum. Departing from such a construct this paper identifies the loopholes that subsist in the global agenda setting process as well as suggesting the possible recommendations towards effective setting of global development agendas.

In realisation of failure of effective agenda, setting in the anthropocene the paper pinpoints the prioritisation of development issues by development players as a critical challenge. It notes that there has been a challenge in the environmental sustainability spectrum and poverty eradication among the policy makers, financiers and the technocrats. The politicians as the resource allocators, policy makers and financiers of development initiatives have been labelling the scientists for being overcautious of the environment while undermining the poverty eradication aspect of development in the name of global north and south cleavage. Focusing on the agenda setting process, the paper identified the loophole in the use of indicators where the current indicators are not powerful enough to influence the bickering policy makers. With late realisation that most finance minister are lawyers who are not scared of death or population figures, use of population on the poverty spectrum and quality indicators in the environmental reporting and agenda setting has proved to be sterile in influencing the bickering policymakers.

While continuous agenda setting is embarked on at the expense of continued environmental deterioration and exacerbated poverty, the paper suggests effective way of setting development agendas. Among the recommendation is the quantification of monetary loss incurred from environmental deterioration, poverty and other development aspects, which will raise critical alarm to the policy makers and financiers who are critically concerned about the economy.

KEY WORDS: Agenda setting, post 2015, Development, Sustainability

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