Contextualization at Micro-Level

The Metropolitan Area of Greater Maputo

The Greater Maputo city area (in other words, including Matola city) is some 675 km$^2$, although the area with more dense urban occupation is approximately 320 km$^2$ (inhabited by 96% of the urban population), as can be seen in Google Maps or other satellite imagery. The urban structure in this conurbation is divided geographically in the following major physically and administratively distinct areas (see figure 5.1).

Maputo

• Urban District 1, usually termed the cidade de cimento, is the central urban core developed in the colonial era with buildings of a long-term nature, including high rise and is relatively well provided with infrastructure and has a very high concentration of social equipment and administrative work places. This district 1, however, also administratively includes Catembe south of the bay, and Inhaca island, mostly rural in nature;

• Urban Districts 2 and 3, which comprise a form of “inner belt” around the above to the north and northwest—also known historically as the subúrbios—is characterized by relatively high-density unplanned residential settlements, established for some time (at least since the 1930s in the northwest), infilling between industrial development along the radial accesses to the central core, with relatively poor provision of infrastructure and social equipment but with a relatively high number of workplaces, especially “informal” commerce, but also some “formal” industry;

• Urban Districts 4 and 5, which comprise an “outer belt” further to the north and northwest of the above, with a mixture of land use: a mix of planned and unplanned residential areas with poor provision of infrastructures and social equipment (the caniço), some industrial
development (along the national road north EN1) but few formal sector work places, most economic engagement being “informal” commerce, but also urban agriculture.¹

Matola

- Matola “City” (District I) has a physically developed central structure of low-density residential areas, relatively well serviced with infrastructure and social equipment, and a range of surrounding residential areas planned and unplanned, but with much lower infrastructure and social equipment levels. This district also has existing well-developed industrial zones, still with some large land reserves—although increasingly occupied by unplanned settlement in recent years—and a peripheral agricultural zone with relatively developed infrastructure, but poor fertility and utilization (now often being redeveloped for housing in condominiums);
- Machava (Districts II and III) has a relatively well-developed town center (based on the railway) and industrial zone along the main rail and road access, as well as a wide variety of relatively recent (1970s and 1980s) lower density residential areas, both planned and unplanned, with generally very poor provision of infrastructure and social equipment, but also significant areas used for urban agriculture (increasingly under pressure). These districts also include large rural areas to the north, also being occupied by generally unplanned development since 2000.

The general functions and economic structure of the metropolitan area are fairly diversified, although they remain substantially similar to those of the colonial era. Maputo is beginning to reoccupy a key position in the macro-regional transport system with its railway and port rehabilitated, after a marked underutilization of these facilities from late 1970s to the late 1980s.² There is also still a significant labor migration from the urban region and its hinterland across the border into South Africa, although mining there has become more mechanized and as such employs fewer people. However, there are many Mozambicans who work in all sorts of sectors across the border, many from the city region—who send back remittances—but this does not get captured in economic data for the city.

Mozambique is gearing up for significant energy export, having now bought out Portuguese interests in the Cabora Bassa dam with future expansion possibility for electricity production on the