

Alienation and polarisation

The abject poor in developing countries such as Kenya do not have equal access to schools and tertiary institutions.

For example, those in rural areas may have under-qualified teachers, cannot afford school fees and need to walk long distances to school. The implication is that such children are less competitive in finding jobs and securing an income in the formal economy and/or to become entrepreneurs.

They can seek outcomes such as nationalisation of state assets and land grabbing, for example in Zimbabwe, and are vulnerable to radical demagogues who propagate populist ideologies, and who can see the potential usefulness of the lack of competencies among the uneducated, i.e. the future is bleak and their hopes are dim. Julius Malema, who propagated the nationalisation of mining companies in South Africa, is an example.

SETTING THE AGENDA

The poor in developing countries may have the power to vote, but not the power to rule and/or to set the agenda of the legislative process after elections. The political elite use them like pawns in a chess game. After securing their support with rhetoric before the



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election, they ignore their plight after the election. The ruling elite enrich themselves and forget about the poor until the next election.

The poor have almost no choice but to survive under desperate conditions in squatter camps and slums, where lack of sanitation contributes to diseases such as diarrhoea and tuberculosis. Such conditions represent the antithesis of a quality or aesthetic lifestyle. In this sort of existence in an unsafe environment where gangs, violence and organised crime are common, they struggle to secure their human dignity, to live meaningfully and to live fulfilled lives.

Such desperate conditions of no hope to improve their future or those of their children can trigger xenophobia towards refugees and emigrants, who compete with them for jobs and income. This is what is happening in South Africa, for example, with xenophobic attacks against refugees and foreigners.