

Event 1

URBAN FORUM ON INFORMAL SETTLEMENT UPGRADING

**Jane Weru, Executive Director Akiba Mashinani Trust (Kenya);
Beth Chitekwe-Biti, Deputy Manager SDI, Former Director of Dialogue on Shelter
(Zimbabwe); Rose Molokoane, SDI Chairperson (South Africa); and Kilion
Nyambuga, Programme Officer, SDI Kenya (Kenya).**

Thursday, 14 February, 2019, 14h30, NUST Hotel School.

PROGRAMME

14h30	Introduction
15h45	Exchange of national and international experiences on informal settlement upgrading, with emphasis on the challenge of scaling-up efforts.
15h30	Exchange with participants

CONVENERS

Integrated Land Management Institute (ILMI), Namibia Housing Action Group (NHAG), Namibia University of Science and Technology (NUST), Shack Dwellers International (SDI), Shack Dwellers Federation of Namibia (SDFN).

ABOUT THE URBAN FORUM

The Urban Forum is transitioning in 2019 to become a permanent platform for multi-stakeholder engagement on urbanization in Namibia, Southern Africa and beyond.

<http://urbanforum.nust.na/>

REFERENCES

- > Various authors. (2017). *Scaling up security of tenure and housing opportunities through a partnership approach: a concept note for co-production between organised communities, local and regional authorities, central government, and universities*. Windhoek. Retrieved from <http://ilmi.nust.na/sites/default/files/Concept%20Note%20Informal%20Settlement%20Upgrading-V3.pdf>
- > ILMI. (2017). *The role of universities in participatory informal settlement upgrading: experiences from Kenya, Namibia, Uganda and Zambia* (ILMI Document Note No. 1/2017). Windhoek: Integrated Land Management Institute. Retrieved from <http://ilmi.nust.na/sites/default/files/ILMI-DN-The-role-of-universities-in-participatory-slum-upgrading-Namibia-Kenya-Uganda-Zambia-WEB.pdf>
- > Choices in Freedom Square: Bottom up Planning in Gobabis: https://youtu.be/l1Xy_LSq7Js
- > Document: http://sdfn.weebly.com/uploads/2/0/9/0/20903024/freedom_square_report_clip2.pdf
- > Community driven sanitation (greenfield): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FEFuAigsPal>

BACKGROUND

Namibia has undergone a drastic transformation in the past three decades. From a situation around Independence in 1990 where informal settlements were considered rare or 'a new phenomenon'¹, to a situation where the majority of those living in an urban area are now living in one².

The urbanization prospects indicate that in the coming decades, the vast majority of the population will live in an urban area³. Without a sizable intervention in sight to improve the situation in existing settlements and plan for future growth, the living conditions in urban areas will aggravate fast.

It is this pressing situation that was recognized in 2018 at the Second National Land Conference, where 'urban land reform' became one of the five areas of discussion. In his closing speech at the Conference, President Hage Geingob declared that the situation in informal settlements to be an "emergency" and a "humanitarian crisis"⁴.

Today, there are several experiences in Namibia that have tried to address the situation in informal settlements. From those first attempts in the early 1990s⁵, to the efforts that the Shack Dwellers Federation of Namibia and the Namibia Housing Action Group have been undertaking since the late 1980s until today. New stakeholders have joined by developing strategies for affordable land developments⁶ and there is also wider recognition within local government regarding the need to approach the matter through a partnership approach. However, the challenge is to **find ways to scale up efforts to meet this new challenge**.

This event is conceived as a platform for exchange of experiences in Namibia with colleagues from Kenya, Zimbabwe and South Africa; countries that face similar challenges with informal settlements and have tried different strategies that will be shared with participants at this Forum.

¹ Peyroux, E., & Graefe, O. (1995). *Precarious Settlements at Windhoek's Periphery. Investigation into the Emergence of a New Urban Phenomenon*. Centre for Research, Information, Action for Development in Africa.

² Through the self-enumeration efforts that the Namibia Housing Action Group and the Shack Dwellers Federation of Namibia conduct, it is estimated that about 2/3 of the urban population in Namibia lives in a shack. This is according to their recent "Profile of Informal Settlements 1998-2008".

³ Lühl, P., & Delgado, G. (2018). Urban Land Reform in Namibia: Getting Ready for Namibia's Urban Future. Presented at the Second National Land Conference, Windhoek: Integrated Land Management Institute. Retrieved from http://dna.nust.na/landconference/submissions_2018/policy-paper-urban-land-reform-2018-final.pdf

⁴ Republic of Namibia. (2018). Statement by His Excellency Dr. Hage G. Geingob, President of the Republic of Namibia, at the closing of the Second National Land Conference. Windhoek.

⁵ Delgado, G. (2018). *A short socio-spatial history of Namibia* (ILMI Working Paper No. 9). Windhoek: Integrated Land Management Institute. Retrieved from <http://ilmi.nust.na/sites/default/files/WP9-DELGADO-A-short-history-of-Namibia-WEB.pdf>

⁶ Weber, B., & Mendelsohn, J. (2017). *Informal settlements in Namibia: their nature and growth. Exploring ways to make Namibian urban development more socially just and inclusive* (Occasional Paper No. 1). Windhoek: Development Workshop. Retrieved from <http://dw-namibia.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/Informal-settlements-in-Namibia-their-nature-and-growth-DWN-2017.pdf>

DISCUSSION TOPICS

1. **Ensure the informal settlement upgrading is bottom-up and participatory, that it takes place through wide-ranging partnerships that can be scaled up:**

Planning to include the community tools of mapping, planning studios with universities, information sharing and deliberation with the local authority. This up scaling can only be done with a commitment and support from government to fast-track the learning and implementation experiences.

2. **Strategies to remove obstacles for the progressive attainment of affordable land and shelter.**

This includes:

- opportunities to step up land availability through integrating the Flexible Land Tenure Project into current collaborative learning
- a density issues for example formal subdivision requirements, the 300m² plot sizes, 10 meter road reserves and 4 meter pan handles, and municipal requirements to install household level water meters. The challenge is how to reach a common understanding with the politicians and government management around how the higher density and mixed land use can lead to more affordable and sustainable land solutions for the urban poor.
- engage in sensitization campaigns (e.g. councillors, civil society) for progressive and community processes that are gradual but steady; engage in process-based thinking and avoid displacement as much as possible.

3. **Finance models for scaling up incremental community driven informal settlement upgrading and house construction.**

Financing for upgrading is facing challenges considering tender procedures and the costs of using contractors. A key challenge is how can the Namibian Urban Poor Fund (Twahangana Fund) be used as the tool to facilitate community/local authority partnerships for informal settlement upgrading, bringing people's own contributions into the process. Tenders, using the formal construction industry, have resulted in unaffordable solutions.

Background to existing government support through the Twahangana Fund: House construction support from the Government to the SDFN has been taking place through the Twahangana Fund. Since 2000 SDFN received annually a grant from the Ministry of Urban and Rural Development Budget, based on the fact that members were saving. This annual budget is now reaching 10 million NAD (about 0.75million US\$), and this year with an additional 5 million from a previous budget year (total then about 1 million US\$) will allow saving groups to build around 500 – (34 m²) houses. While these contributions' benefit goes a long way, the expenditure on this sector is comparatively little in views of other on-going public projects; expenditure on upgrading informal settlements is *social investment* that has positive effects in health, education, and sense of being part of the nation. These houses cost less than 40,000 NAD (2,800 US\$). This is about 5 times cheaper than contractor-built houses by the parastatal organization.

Background to informal settlement upgrading: The government supported one pilot for water and sewer upgrading in the Freedom Square Informal Settlement in Gobabis which reached 1,000 households. The community, NHAG and the Municipality implemented the project in partnership. Access to water and sanitation has a cost of less than NAD10,000 per household, while the formally developed individual plots cost around NAD80,000 (depending on soil conditions).

INTERNATIONAL PARTICIPANTS



JANE WERU, Executive Director Akiba Mashinani Trust (Kenya)

Jane Weru is a lawyer and holds a master's degree in NGO Management from the LSE. Her early work focused on public interest litigation on behalf of poor communities threatened with forceful evictions and violent demolitions. She has been the Executive Director of Kituo Cha Sheria and of Pamoja Trust. Jane is the Executive Director and founder member of Akiba Mashinani Trust, a Board Member of the Slum/Shack Dwellers International (SDI), an Ashoka Fellow and a member of the National Task Force for the preparation of the Community Land Bill and the Evictions and Resettlement Bill. Lecture at UN-Habitat UNI Lecture series: <https://unhabitat.org/too-pressed-to-wait-jane-weru-executive-director-akiba-mashinani-trust/> Profile in Ashoka: <https://www.ashoka.org/en/fellow/jane-weru>



DR. BETH CHITEKWE-BITI, Deputy Manager SDI, Former Director of Dialogue on Shelter (Zimbabwe)

Dr Chitekwe-Biti has linked research on urban sanitation with innovations in sanitation solutions being piloted by the Zimbabwean Federation. She also provides liaison between the Dialogue on Shelter Trust and three universities in Zimbabwe linking planning education with the practical challenges in towns and cities in the country. This has led to the development of practical learning workshops for planning, engineering and architectures students within informal settlements working alongside slum dwellers to develop solutions to a variety of challenges in a collaborative manner. Dialogue on Shelter is an NGO working in alliance with the Zimbabwe Homeless People's Federation to address urban poverty in its various forms. <http://www.dialogueonshelter.co.zw/> Twitter: <https://twitter.com/BethChit>



ROSE MOLOKOANE, SDI Chair (South Africa). A veteran of the anti-apartheid struggle and recognized as one of the most internationally known grassroots activists involved in land tenure and housing issues, Rose Molokoane is the National Chairperson of the 80,000-member South African Homeless People's Federation, their national savings coordinator, and a Board Member of Shack/Slum Dwellers International (SDI) and the Federation of the Urban Poor (FEDUP). Molokoane has initiated federations of savings schemes throughout Africa, Asia, and Latin America. She was awarded the UN-Habitat Scroll of Honor in 2005 for her struggle to bring land and homes to the poor. In the same year, she was appointed to the Council of the South African Social Housing Regulatory Authority (SHRA) by South Africa's Minister of Human Settlements. She was the Chair of the World Urban Campaign Steering Committee/ > Web World Urban Campaign:

<http://www.worldurbancampaign.org/> Web SDI: <http://sasdialliance.org.za/minister-sisulu-appoints-fedups-rose-molokoane-to-council-of-social-housing-regulatory-authority/>

KILION NYAMBUGA NYOWINO, Programme Officer, SDI Kenya (KENYA) Kilion Nyambuga is a Graduate Urban and Regional Planner from the University of Nairobi. Since 2013, Kilion has been working as a Programme Officer in charge of Data Management and Planning for the Slum Dweller International – Kenya. During this period, Kilion supported the SDI network (which includes 17 countries in Africa) in its historic transition from analogue to digital data collection and management. Kilion has also supported peer-to-peer learning exchanges (which is SDI's primary knowledge transfer) with community members and his professional peers in 17 cities in Kenya and 5 SDI countries, including notably Liberia, Senegal, Nigeria, Zimbabwe, and Uganda. As Programme officer at SDI-K, Kilion has focused on ensuring access to accurate data on slums for planning. His current project management portfolio includes working with Nairobi City County and Mukuru Community members to help develop a Mukuru Integrated Development Plan whose implementation will address the unique development challenges and opportunities faced by the settlement.