



SESSION 1

Informal Urbanisation and Peoples' Processes

Rose Molokoane

Chair, World Urban Campaign

National Chairperson, Shack/Slum Dwellers International

A veteran of the anti-apartheid struggle and recognised as one of the most internationally known grass-roots 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, a Board Member of Shack/Slum Dwellers International (SDI) and a Board Member of the Federation of the Urban and Rural Poor (FEDUP). Based in South Africa, she is a resident of the Oukasie a settlement outside Pretoria and a member of its savings scheme. Ms Molokoane has initiated federations of savings schemes throughout Africa, Asia, and Latin America. To acknowledge her achievements in bringing land and homes to the poor, she was awarded the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) Scroll of Honour in 2005. In the same year, she was appointed to the Council of South Africa's Social Housing Regulatory Authority (SHRA) by that country's Minister of Human Settlements. In 2016, Ms Molokoane was elected to chair the World Urban Campaign Steering Committee for the coming two years for the next two-year period.¹

The session was moderated by Geraldine van Rooi, Lecturer, Department of Architecture and Spatial Planning, NUST.

¹ <https://www.worldurbancampaign.org/civil-society-takes-over-leadership-world-urban-campaign>, last accessed 26 July 2019; <http://habitat3.org/the-conference/programme/speakers/rose-molokoane/>, last accessed 26 July 2019; <http://www.sasdialliance.org.za/minister-sisulu-appoints-fedups-rose-molokoane-to-council-of-social-housing-regulatory-authority/>, last accessed 26 July 2019.

I am fed-up. I become strategically fed-up, because I do not go on the street to fight my government: I invite my government to come and sit around a table and then we engage, deliberate, argue, and compromise and end up agreeing amongst each other.

My organisation is called the Federation of the Urban and Rural Poor. In short, it is called FEDUP. I am a coordinator there, and I am also part of a saving[s] group called *Oukasie Savings Scheme*, which is part of the Federation. FEDUP is a South African organisation led by women using their savings as a tool to mobilise and organise. It has given birth to many other countries' federations, like the Federation in Namibia. Why am I just bringing this picture to you? To understand that poor people can be homeless and landless, but they are not hopeless. They can build themselves up to achieve what they want in their lives.

Shack/Slum Dwellers International (SDI) is an organisation of 33 countries around the world, especially in Latin America, in India and many in Africa. We are really sick and tired of becoming subjects of discussion from the side of the formal world. We come from the informal world, and we are really sick and tired of becoming beneficiaries of the decisions that are taken by other people without involving us. But we didn't give up; we just said. "Let's organise ourselves so that our voices can be heard."

In 1987, the Catholic Church organised civil society, brought them together and told them: "Stand up and do it for yourself, because government cannot do it for everyone." 1991 they came to South Africa. I was interested to listen to the discussions. The Indians were leading the discussions then. They said to us, "We have voted for our government for 40 years and we waited for honey and milk." The Indians said, "We have voted for our Indian Prime Minister expecting honey and milk to flow on the street, but at the end of the day we received a queue of 800 people sharing one toilet." As poor people, if you vote for your own president, like I did with Nelson Mandela, I thought everything will be alright.

How can 800 people share one toilet? I wanted to see the queue! I was then invited to India. In 1992 we went there to experience the queue, but you will never see people in the queue. If you really want to see the queue, you will go where the people are and you will find people squatting on the pavement relieving themselves because there are no toilets.

Coming back to southern Africa, you will find that those people who are very poor, who the government is neglecting, started organising themselves and they said: "It is never too late. Let's come together." Poor people do not know how to read and write, but they are strong in savings. These women came together and said, "These are our lives. These are our families' lives. We are the only ones that can change the way we live, and if we change it, we will show our government that we can do it."

I am telling you, today, the very same women are still there from 1991. Now, when the Government of India wants to do something in the informal settlements, they go to these women and say, "Can you help us to do it?" That is the power of organising, and that is the power of putting women at the centre of the organisation.

In 1991, the Indians challenged us in South Africa: "We are hearing you say, 'Mandela! Mandela! Release Mandela!' What are you going to do when Mandela comes out from prison? Are you going to wait for him to build more houses? To build more schools? To build more toilets? To give you more water?" And then we said, "Yes. He will be our president." After going to India, I realised I had to prepare myself for rainy times.

We started our savings scheme in 1992, but we didn't just say "Save!". We had to come up with an agenda that could bring us together as poor people. The agenda belonged to us: it was driven by no one else but us, to take decisions on our own behalf. The agenda was about saving, putting women at the centre, data collection through information-gathering, profiling and enumeration, mapping, shack counting and all that. Then we said, "What are we going to do with it?" Then we also said, "Create partnerships with our councillors, our municipalities, with our provincial government, and with our national government." But the one that we targeted mostly was the housing department [Department of Human Settlements], because we know that housing is one of the biggest problems in communities and if we do not target the housing department, the policies will be drafted by the people who do not understand the life of the people in informal settlements.

In 1994, when South Africa got democracy, I was part of it. We went there and said, "How are we going to do [it], so that this government sees our process? We do not want to be like the Indians and get there very late." The first Minister of Housing was Joe Slovo.² At that time, we had a small NGO that was supporting us to formalise our informal language. Our language was just like a street language; we had to go to somebody who was educated to change our language for it to be understood by the formal world. During this Minister's first hundred days in office, we knocked at his door. Our organisation was already four years old. He opened the door. Then we said, "We are here. We do not want to be late. Listen to us. We need your support. We want to build our own houses." He said, "Give me the model." We gave him the model, and he used that model to open a conference in the Free State.³ In that conference, he brought all the people to come and make a pledge: businesspeople, academics, local government. We were the only poor people's organisation that attended, and we were so afraid. I remember, I was part of that; and I remember the guys from the unions telling me, "What do you want here?" Then I said, "The Minister invited us. He told us to come and attend this." Fortunately, my NGO wrote a statement for me. I can read, but at that time I could not speak English fluently. I was the only young and thin one among the huge, white and black men with ties and suits. I started reading our pledges and organisation. We pledged that we would continue to organise and mobilise poor people

² Anti-apartheid activist, member of the South African Communist Party, and Minister of Housing from 1994 until his death in 1995 (<http://www.sahistory.org.za/people/joe-slovo>).

³ One of the Provinces in South Africa.

around savings, putting women at the centre, making sure that we continue to drive our own development through self-reliance. It was the only speech that the minister took seriously, because the others wanted profit. We did not want profit, we just wanted to build houses. We signed the pledge and from that day, the Department of Human Settlement knew that, when we talk, we do what we say. We do not just talk what we write, but we talk what we do. Then the Minister called us for another meeting on our own, without any other people. Then he said, "I am pledging R10 million to you to start your own housing development." That is how we started to build our own houses. At that time, we were able to build 70 m² and 80 m² houses. We shared the money amongst ourselves, using it as a revolving fund, lending to each other. At that time a house cost N\$10,000. To date, all the people we have built houses for through this organisation are still occupying their houses; they are continuing to improve them through the savings that we are making: plastering, putting in a new kitchen and extending their houses. The savings did not stop: every week people come together to share their experiences of life. Our savings are not just to put money together: we use savings to bring people together, to share their challenges and their daily problems, and to come up with solutions to address these daily problems.

In 1995 Joe Slovo died, and they brought in the new Minister, Sanki Mahanyele. At that time, the N\$10 million was not yet in the bank. Then we went to her and said, "You know, in our black culture, the word of the dead person should be respected. The minister promised us N\$10 million. Can you bring it?" She was frightened by the words of the dead person, and she agreed and said that we should sign an agreement. We then had the *uTshani* Fund Agreement. *uTshani* means "it is us". On top of that, she established the National Housing Board. On this Board she invited experts: the architects, the urban planners, the financiers, the lawyers, everyone. And again, I was the only one there from the community, without any degree. During that time, I became an unprofessional professional, because while they were talking, for the first three meetings, I sat listening to them. Every time before the meeting, they would give you a very big bible that you had to go and read.⁴ I can't read: I just need money to build a house. *Finish en klaar*.⁵ In the third meeting I told them, "Guys, I am not here to come and read this bible. I am sent here by the poor people from a grass-roots community to come and tell you to give us money. We want to build houses. How you can give it to us? I can explain it you." So, they gave me a chance to make a presentation. It was the first time I did a presentation to the formal world.

We are the people who can drive the People's Housing Process (PHP) Programme.⁶ We can do our own plans, we can do our own costing, we can identify our own builders, we can manage our own finance – only if you give us our own subsidies upfront. They gave us money on top of the N\$10 million that we have been revolving.

So, we continued. They saw we were building bigger and better houses. But they said they would continue with their way of building houses. They called

them Reconstruction and Development Programme houses, we call them RDP;⁷ but in our different languages we call them *ovezinyawo*. You know what *ovezinyawo* is? When you are sleeping in that house, your feet are outside. So, we used to call them that because they were so small. When government saw that people were now building bigger houses and [that there were] other people who were lazing around, being too dependent on government, they said, "[How can] they build bigger houses with the same money we use to build smaller houses?" They realised it was a divide-and-rule situation, and they said, "No, let us review this PHP policy." They tried to review it. Then they called developers, and the developers ran to banks and got loans and identified the beneficiaries on their behalf. The beneficiaries contributed that money and it failed because they could not build the way we build. For us, when the subsidy comes, we do not need profit. All the money goes into the houses.

That is where the problem is in South Africa. To date, maybe 45% of the houses that they built for the people do not belong to the people that were supposed to be benefitting. They came and saw it was Rose Molokoane's house; then she sold it to Anna Muller and moved out to the shacks again. It's a continuous problem. The very same people that were told, "We are building it for you," have moved out. They have now again started other informal settlements. So, doing it for the people is good, but you should do it with them.

Anna Muller told me when we were at the SDI meetings [that] mass housing was coming to Namibia. I thought, "Oh my God, Namibian Government, you are going to throw a lot of money into the sea." Because our governments are spoiling us by saying, "We are doing it for you." I will never enjoy something that you are providing for me; but if my sweat is there, I will preserve it because it will become a treasure to me.

When we [FEDUP] came here to Namibia, it was in 1991, we came to a conference to start the Federation in Namibia. Then, in 2000, when I came to Namibia for the first time, we met with Minister Nicky Iyambo.⁸ We started the first enumeration project in Okahandja Park. Then we made the model house to show the Minister that we could build this house. We built the model house with conventional construction materials and the Minister came and inaugurated [it]. After that, we said, "Now, what do you pledge, Minister? We do not just want you to cut a ribbon without a pledge." Then the Minister pledged N\$1 million to our Federation of Namibia. That is how we started to build bigger houses, bigger than the South African ones. From then on, Namibia [the Namibian Government] gave us N\$1 million every year because they built trust in us. "If the people can do it, [it's] better; if we do it for them, it becomes a disaster." It forces you to change the policy, because if you let government do it by themselves, they will just come with the mass housing copied from South Africa. Then your policy will be a very beautiful policy – like a beautiful lady who is waiting for somebody to propose love, but nobody comes to her and says, "I love you." Government can join us today in doing it together, to build bigger and better houses for everyone. I am not criticising, we are calling for joining hands.

⁷ The RDP is a socio-economic programme in South Africa launched in 1994 to address past imbalances, particularly in the provision of basic services (RSA 1994). Housing represented one of the key aspects of this programme. By 2016, about 4.3 million "housing opportunities" were reported to have been delivered since 1994 (<http://www.dhs.gov.za/content/media-statements/minister-sisulu-calls-south-africans-celebrate-43-million-houses-and>). See: RSA/Republic of South Africa, 1994. White Paper on Reconstruction and Development. Government Gazette No. 16085, Notice No. 1954 of 1994. Cape Town: Parliament of the Republic of South Africa. Available at <https://www.gov.za/sites/www.gov.za/files/governmentgazetteid16085.pdf>, last accessed 14 August 2019.

⁸ Minister of Regional and Local Government and Housing from 1996 to 2002.

⁴ Most likely documents commonly distributed to those participating in institutional boards, such as the minutes of the previous meeting, the agenda and other supporting materials.

⁵ A common expression in South Africa and Namibia, which literally translates as "finished and finished" and idiomatically as "that's the end of it, that's final". In the Afrikaans language, *klaar* means "finished" and *en* is "and".

⁶ The People's Housing Process (PHP) Programme was adopted in 1998; in 2008, it became the Enhanced People's Housing Process (ePHP); see Tissington (2011).

Discussion

Rita Khiba, an urban planner, asked whether they had any experience with building on plots of land smaller than 300 m².

Guillermo Delgado of NUST asked what their relations were like with the different government levels and other parties, like professionals or other movements.

Barry Watson, an urban planner, mentioned that government funding should be placed in servicing land as a form of subsidy to mitigate housing costs.

Mike Ipinge, an official from the Swakopmund Municipality, asked about how the South African Federation participated in the construction of houses and how it dealt with the issue of building standards.

Ms Molokoane responded that they generally employed builders and that they bought materials such as windows and doorframes from suppliers that sourced products of good standard. She clarified that they sometimes went as a group and tried to negotiate with suppliers and builders for better deals. She also said that it was sometimes necessary to build incrementally, as the funds were not always enough to build the house one needed from the start. She clarified that, in South Africa, a variety of subsidy mechanisms existed, including institutional, individual, RDP and social housing subsidies.⁹ She also mentioned that the PHP Programme¹⁰ created some support for community-led housing initiatives. Nevertheless, she noted that PHPs were not only about the house per se, but also entailed the education, health and livelihoods of housing beneficiaries. She added that the South African Government had learned that building houses for low-income groups through developers sometimes led to corruption. She named examples where builders would be appointed and work would commence, but later the project was left unfinished and the developer disappeared. She mentioned that they had a good relationship with all the levels of government and had signed memoranda of understanding with various parties. She also noted that money was sourced from the national government but was administered at provincial level, so they had to fight for their projects to be allocated funds. She also stated they had a very good relationship with the Minister of Human Settlements¹¹ and her officials. However, although they knew each other by name, the difficulties would start when it was time to implement partnerships, she noted. She added that, sometimes, even when a Minister gave an order, when the Federation had to follow it up with Ministry officials, they would be told that the order could not be implemented as agreed because of a potential conflict with certain policies. She also stated that a relationship would be built with specific officials, but when such individuals were promoted or demoted, their substitutes might not necessarily understand how to work with low-income groups. In addition, she related that they had faced some corrupt

officials who demanded to be allocated a portion of the funds for a Federation project before authorising the money to be transferred. She made it clear that she was not trying to gossip about or badmouth anyone but wanted to paint a clear picture of the nature of the challenges that community-led processes faced.

Ms Molokoane also shared her experience in respect of the State-owned enterprise known as the Independent Development Trust,¹² which had developed infrastructure in peripheral areas for communities relocated there from central areas. She mentioned that, in such cases, communities usually refused to be relocated because of the resultant increase such a move would mean for transport costs. She also spoke of instances where the houses had been developed by the RDP, but the toilets had been installed by the Independent Development Trust. However, since low-income beneficiaries were then required to pay monthly rates for municipal services, some of them were forced to move back to informal settlements. Furthermore, she noted that some of the houses developed by the Federation were built to higher standards than those employed by the commissioned private developers. She informed the Forum that, for every project that the Federation developed, they liaised with the National Home Builders Registration Council.¹³ She referred to municipal and provincial inspectors as well in this regard, stating that, without engaging and satisfying the requirements of such entities, they would not be able to get subsidies. However, she also admitted that it became challenging when three different assessments were given, which created confusion. She also acknowledged that some inspectors expected something in return for a positive assessment, which was another problem. She explained that the Federation's strength came from the information that they had gathered about their membership over the years. She pointed out that, although they had few means, the Federation was 'rich in information'. Regarding plot sizes, she mentioned that the ones in the Western Cape Province measured about 180 m², but in the Gauteng, North West and Free State Provinces, it was 250 m². She described how Federation processes created some form of organisation and discipline among low-income groups, offering as an example how they avoided illegal electricity connections. She also pointed to some resistance from councillors who feared that Federation leaders could take over their positions.

Nghidinua Daniel, Executive Director of MURD, stated that, in Namibian policies, there was room for everyone. He noted that, in the MHDP Blueprint, there were seven sub-programmes catering for the needs of all groups.¹⁴ He believed the perception that mass housing was only about credit-linked houses was because they were the only ones developed for a pilot phase. He mentioned that, even as the current Urban Forum was taking place, officials were inaugurating houses in Tsandi that had been developed in partnership with the SDFN and the private sector.¹⁵ He added that the MURD had commissioned NUST to review the MHDP Blueprint, and pointed to the Flexible Land Tenure System¹⁶ as a Government effort to secure tenure

⁹ For a thorough explanation of social housing in South Africa, refer to the contribution in this volume by Anthea Houston in Session 5.

¹⁰ See footnote 6.

¹¹ These programmes are (1) Land use planning, design and service infrastructure; (2) Construction and delivery of credit-linked housing; (3) Informal settlements upgrading; (4) Social housing; (5) People housing processes; (6) Rural housing and sanitation; and (7) Strengthening the legislative, regulatory and policy environment, and capacity building (Republic of Namibia 2013).

¹² Ohorongo Cement, FNB Namibia Holdings Foundation Trust, Pukewitz Foundation, and Shack Dwellers Federation of Namibia. (2017). Combined press release. Changing lives for the better: Official opening of Tsandi houses in fight against poverty. Retrieved from http://www.ohorongo-cement.com/cms_documents/changing-lives-for-the-better-official-opening-of-tsandi-houses-in-the-fight-against-poverty-e7a3594fb.pdf

¹³ The object of the Flexible Land Tenure System is to provide a more accessible titling process in terms of land ownership costs and procedures for persons who live in informal settlements or who are provided with low-income housing (Ed's note: this is what the Act states in section 2(b)). The idea was first mooted in the mid-1990s, but the relevant legislation, the Flexible Land Tenure Act, 2012 (No. 4 of 2012) and its associated Regulations, would only become operational on 31 May 2018 (Ed's note: checked the GG 6607 online).

for lower-income groups. He acknowledged the need to mainstream people-centred development and that having people organised helped Government efforts. In closing, he asked Ms Molokoane to share some of the challenges the Federation had faced with regard to its internal dynamics and to expand on its work in the rural areas.

Ms Molokoane related that it was challenging to develop projects in partnership with the government. For example, she stated that, when money was allocated to their projects, they were required to produce a business plan. However, it took government about six months to respond to that plan. The Federation were then required to produce an implementation plan. This was followed by another waiting period. They might then sometimes need to produce a geotechnical investigation on the plot they were intending to develop. They had to ask the provincial engineers to undertake the investigation, which again took time. Once everything was in place, the Minister or an official needed to co-sign the contract to launch the project, but the Minister might be abroad and the official in question might be at a workshop. Once the Minister or official had returned, s/he might need to address a backlog of work and the proposed projects might not be prioritised. Moreover, once the contract was finally signed, the Federation was given a short timeframe to undertake and finalise the project or risk termination of the contract. She also mentioned that some processes now required online applications and she, for example, had no computer skills. Nonetheless, she acknowledged receiving assistance from their support NGOs in this regard. When it came to councillors, Ms Molokoane related that when some of them felt their authority was being threatened by organised groups, the Federation engaged them to ease some of those fears. Councillors would sometimes be invited to inaugurate some of the houses, and they would be provided with facts about the project; these engagements could then be counted among a councillor's achievements during their tenure. Ms Molokoane noted that, during the Habitat III¹⁷ process, much had been said about institutional partnerships. In this respect, she mentioned the Pretoria Declaration in particular.¹⁸ She also encouraged professionals, particularly urban planners, to understand 'the language of informality'. She called on governments to draft policies that worked with the people and to develop awareness campaigns about urban rights so that as many people as possible knew what was available and understood what was at stake. She stressed that they the Federation and people living in informal settlements wanted to be part of 'mass housing'. In her conclusion, Ms Molokoane stated that the Federation wanted to be partners in – rather mere end users of – government processes, and wanted to be involved not only in project planning, but also in project implementation.

Heinrich Schroeder, owner of Kavango Block Brick, pointed out that, before Namibia's independence, building societies¹⁹ existed to assist lower-income groups. He felt these institutions needed to be brought back.

Ottile Nailulu, an SDFN member, clarified that the SDFN had been part

of the process of developing the MHDP Blueprint, but then they had been left out of the pilot project.

Naomi Simion, Director of MURD's Habitat Division, asked how FEDUP dealt with the issue of security of tenure.

Taro Ashipala, from the City of Windhoek's Community Development Division, asked Ms Molokoane what happened when a ploy of land took long to be serviced by the South African local authorities. He also enquired about FEDUP's experiences with groups that were uncooperative and about conflicts among group members. A third question from this participant related to whether FEDUP groups eventually dissolved after attaining security of tenure or whether they maintained their status.

An unidentified participant from the University of Namibia asked about FEDUP's projects in the rural areas.

Ms Molokoane responded that they had a rural subsidy programme and that they negotiated with traditional authorities who owned communal land where FEDUP intended undertaking a project. She noted that they needed a certificate allowing them to obtain ownership of the land, so they required a letter from the relevant traditional authority confirming ownership and then applied for permission to occupy the area in question. Once they had that permission, FEDUP could apply for the rural subsidy from government. She recounted that this system operated well in the provinces of the Eastern Cape, KwaZulu-Natal, Limpopo and Mpumalanga, where FEDUP had several projects in rural areas thanks to the traditional authorities' receptivity to them. However, in another case, the Federation had bought a piece of land from a private owner with their members' savings, but had not been eligible for a subsidy because the land was privately owned in an urban area. FEDUP therefore gave over the ownership to the Municipality concerned and were then able to access the subsidy. She did mention that groups do dissolve. In other example, Ms Molokoane described how they had entered into a partnership agreement with a Municipality and were able to access land, but a new councillor had later opposed the partnership and the Federation had to take the matter to court. She noted that, 20 years later, the case had still not been resolved, entailing that the beneficiaries had still not been able to obtain their title deeds. She acknowledged that some only approached the Federation to get a house: they had no interest in saving or the collective processes. Others signed up but then disappeared. However, once it looked likely that they could access land, they suddenly reappeared, claiming they had been registered all along. Ms Molokoane reported that they mitigated such issues through regular meetings and exchange programmes²⁰, and acknowledged that FEDUP was an entity that continuously needed to solve problems.

The Moderator asked the speaker what message she had for central and local government.

¹⁷ Habitat III refers to the United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development in Quito, Ecuador, from 17 to 20 October 2016 (<http://habitat3.org/the-conference/about-habitat-3/>, last accessed 28 July 2019).

¹⁸ UNGA/United Nations General Assembly. 2016. Pretoria Declaration of the Habitat III Thematic Meeting on Informal Settlements (A/CONF.226/PC.3/12). Available at <http://habitat3.org/wp-content/uploads/Pretoria-Declaration-E.pdf>, last accessed 19 August 2018.

¹⁹ A building society is a financial institution owned by its members usually specialising in lending for the purpose of housing. In Namibia, these are legislated by the Building Societies Act, 1986 (No. 2 of 1986), but they are currently largely in disuse.

²⁰ Learning exchanges between federation groups nationally and internationally are key practices of SDI members; see: SDI. (2016). About Us. Retrieved September 18, 2019, from Know Your City—SDI website: <http://knowyourcity.info/who-is-sdi/about-us/>

Ms Molokoane replied that the former UN-Habitat Director, Dr Joan Clos, admitted to her that urban planners were not doing a good job because they thought they were convinced they knew what people wanted. This was the background for launching the World Urban Campaign and naming her as the chair; it meant a grass-roots member would lead and compel urban planners and architects to work with inhabitants. She related that the conventional way of working with aerial photographs and designing without meeting the inhabitants of the spaces in question needed to change.

Gabriel Marín Castro, the Minister of Urban and Rural Development's Special Advisor on Mass Housing, described himself as an architect by profession. He related that mass housing had been attempted in many parts of the world. He mentioned the Million Homes Programme in Sweden,²¹ but clarified that Swedish society was very different from its Namibian counterpart. Instead, he encouraged looking for lessons in Asia and Latin America for the similarities they shared with the African context. He noted that experience had shown that mass housing programmes only benefited the middle classes, not the very poor. He stated that this was exactly what had happened in Namibia. He recommended that Namibia issue a set of guidelines on the PHP Programme, and that it was important to help groups to organise and empower those in direst need.

Ms Molokoane explained that, in Uganda, FEDUP had partnered with the cities of Kampala and Jinja to create a forum for bringing together the various community-based organisations as well as other stakeholders such as residents and local authorities. The forum had since been institutionalised. She mentioned noted that some without interest eventually fall out the process, but that some remain. She reckoned that this has been a way to bring together inhabitants and local government. She observed that social processes could be 'messy'; this created tension with government, who were more interested in developing housing units than in the necessary time-consuming discussions. She nevertheless encouraged exploring the idea of a forum and suggested governments ringfence funds in their budget to support such gatherings and to create mechanisms to institutionalise cooperation through them.

The Moderator asked the speaker what message she had for students and young professionals.

Ms Molokoane mentioned that when professionals came to work with FEDUP, what the Federation wanted from them was not so much their certificates as their willingness to 'get their hands dirty'. She clarified that this was not because FEDUP did not respect degrees, but because they wanted to encourage professionals approaching them to use their education strategically, e.g. to mediate between them and local government. She described FEDUP as 'the informal university', although it nurtured relationships with various universities as well, including the University of Cape Town, the University of Johannesburg and the University of the Witwatersrand. Such partnerships

worked through what were known as planning studios, some of which had taken place in Namibia as well.²² She encouraged students and young professionals to approach FEDUP and see how they could contribute. She also thanked the MURD Executive Director for listening to her and invited him to take action.

Mr Daniel thanked the audience and NUST and encouraged participants in the session to become involved.

²¹ With support from the Association of African Planning Schools as well as Cities Alliance, two planning studios took place in Gobabis through a partnership between the Gobabis Municipality, the SDFN, the Namibia Housing Action Group and NUST (SDFN & NHAG 2014).