Event 4

SEEING NAMIBIA'S URBAN FUTURE:
visualising futures through informal settlement upgrading.

Thursday, February 13th, Gobabis: Municipality building and Land Pavilion site
Friday, February 14th, Department of Architecture and Spatial Planning (DASP)

Internationally, there is vast documentation on 'good practices' regarding informal settlement upgrading. However, many 'recommendations' remain at the policy level and, in many cases, abstract. This workshop is aimed at visualising urban futures based on strategies that generate equity, mutual trust among stakeholders, livelihood opportunities, and a richer urban everyday life.

The workshop lead participant is **Thorsten Deckler, Principal of 26'10 south Architects**, a practice that has received local and international acclaim for forward thinking infrastructure and housing projects rooted in a southern hemisphere dynamic. It will also include a joint session with the Urban Strategies and Planning programme, at the **Institute for Housing and Urban Development Studies (IHS), Erasmus University Rotterdam**.

PROGRAMME

DAY 1. The first part of this workshop will take place in Gobabis, the site of arguably the most expansive and accomplished case of informal settlement upgrading in Namibia.

The day will start with a short drive to familiarise participants with the entire urban area. This will be followed by an 'interactive game' co-hosted by the Gobabis Municipality and the IHS that will bring stakeholders together to re-create 'real life' situations with the objective of reflecting collectively on stakeholder contributions and the overall process of informal settlement upgrading in Gobabis.

After lunch, we will move to the site of the 'Land Pavilion', a youth-led, participatory intervention aiming to activate public space in an upgraded informal settlement. There, participants will be able to walk around the area, and familiarise themselves with the spatial realities of Gobabis' informal settlements. Led by Thorsten Deckler and a number of lecturers, participants will be exploring life drawing as method of inquiry of the everyday life and livelihood strategies of residents.

DAY 2. The morning session will depart from the sketches produced on the previous day. Participants will be gathered in groups to develop visuals and physical models envisioning alternative spatial visions of housing, services and public spaces in informal settlements in Namibia.

The outcome of the workshop is an impromptu exhibition of models and sketches in the atrium of DASP that will open to the public after the 'First Bell Assembly' of the Department at 16:00. The exhibition will subsequently be exhibited in Gobabis and other local authorities in Namibia.

SCHEDULE

THURSDAY, February 13th

Time	Activity
6.45h	Meeting of participants
7.00h	Departure from NUST
9.30h	Arrival to Gobabis
9.30-10.30h	Drive around various neighbourhoods in Gobabis: *Main road, Southern suburbs, Industrial areas, Freedom Square, Kanaan, Epako, Nossobville.*
10.30-12.00h	Meeting at the Municipality and interactive game session (see Annex).
12.00h	Lunch with Municipality officials (e.g. planners, community development) and councillors. *Venue t.b.c.*
13h30	Meeting at Land Pavilion site and introduction to workshop
14.00-15.30h	Life drawing in Freedom Square
15.30h	Departure
18.00h	Arrival to Windhoek
18.00h	*[Optional] Panel discussion on Modernism in Namibia @Goethe Institute*

FRIDAY, February 14th

Time	Activity
8.00h	Workshop, DASP Atrium. *Group work, interaction with lead participant and organisers*
10.30h	Break
11.00-12.30h	Setting up of exhibition
12.30h	*[Optional] Lecture on Student Housing by Thorsten Deckler*
14.00h	Arrival of guests for 'First Bell Assembly', guided tour through exhibition for Her Worship Fransina Kahungu, Mayor, City of Windhoek, and guests.
14.30-16.00h	*[Optional] 'First Bell Assembly'.*
16.30h	Refreshments

Workshop coordinating team For NUST: Guillermo Delgado, Urban Forum convener; Phillip Lühl, Head of Department (DASP); Gaby Hansen, Lecturer (DASP); Sophia van Greunen, Lecturer (DASP); Braam Harris, Lecturer (DASP); Madelein Stoffberg, Lecturer (DASP); Geraldine van Rooi, Lecturer (DASP)*; Pieter Genis, Lecturer (DASP)*. For IHS: Dr Alexander Jachnow, Head of Urban Strategies and Planning (USP); Elena Petsani (USP). (*t.b.c.)

About the Urban Forum The Urban Forum is a platform for multi-stakeholder engagement on urbanisation in Namibia, Southern Africa and beyond. http://urbanforum.nust.na/

Contact urbanforum@nust.na

ANNEX 1

THE NEXT CITY
A DRAWING AND MODELLING WORKSHOP IN TWO PARTS
NUST in collaboration with Thorsten Deckler (26'10 south Architects)

source: the 495 CITY, AZA Masterclass by 26'10 south Architects with Peter Barber and Sameep Padora

THE NEXT CITY

How can we envision the city as a 'natural', more just habitat in which humans can thrive? How do we do this more realistically when inequality is an ever increasing reality? One way is to recognise that the 'next' city already exists, that it is already under construction, with large parts being built through countless incremental actions made by ordinary people. These actions are underpinned by choices and priorities that may not be clear to professionals in decision making positions. A case in point is the delivery of state housing all over the world that is characterised by the repetition of top structures located on cheap land away from city centres. Yet people have proven capable of building their own housing environments, often of a high spatial quality and programmatic diversity in line with inhabitants' immediate needs. How can the built environment profession re-align itself more closely to these needs and harness the capacity of people in creating cities that thrive?

This workshop offers you the opportunity to observe, draw and model this future city. To give it a shape and form and in the process broaden your understanding and relevance as architects. On day one you will start by exploring various 'live-world' scenarios within Gobabis. The hybrid situations of working, trading, living, learning, socialising and playing that people construct for themselves contain clues as to what the next city can look like. On day 2 you will use his information to deploy the elements of architecture and planning such as programme, scale and proportion to model a thriving urbanity in intricate detail. The outcome will be a collectively built 1:20 model of a street of future Gobabis.

PART 01_LIFE WORLDS

During your visit to Gobabis you will produce hand drawings that capture aspects of life worlds you will encounter. The term life worlds was coined by Edgar Pieterse in his lecture *'African Cities: Grasping the Unknowable'* in which he uses the term to make a case for the development of the city to be informed by the lived realities of its citizens. These realities should serve as informants which help re-frame questions of development more accurately.

"…I want to put it to you that a big part of the problem has been the tendency to try and "fix" the negative social and environmental externalities of urbanization. Why? Well, if our automatic response is one of moral outrage about the suffering of the poor, we tend to loose sight of the very people we try to help, and their innately complex and diverse 'life worlds' must figure into problem-solving research."

You are being asked to *document the life within the built form of the city* by observing and recording how people have created shelter, how they trade, socialise, worship and so on. This is not an empirical exercise. At the very least this exercise should stimulate an awareness of the specific spatial arrangements, deals, and negotiations people make to survive and thrive. This information will be used to imagine a future version of Gobabis.

Deliverable:
In groups of two, you need to study one aspect of a life world in Gobabis through drawing. Your drawing needs to portray more than just a reality as you find it. It needs to allude to and describe how this reality is constructed, how space is used and why. This means you will need to speak to people as you draw. The plan below shows how a family is constructing rental rooms (behind their state subsidised house) funded through a carwash business. It speaks not about housing as a product but a process. Make drawings that explain use over time, draw sections, details and atmospheres, signage, goods, furniture, movement, animals, plants and materials. You will need all this info for day 2.

Format your drawings on A3 portrait, indicate north as well as the scale. You can join A3's as needed on their long side. Give your life world a name and make sure your drawing tells the story as clearly as possible.
Pin up all the life worlds together so that the entire group benefits from a collective reading.
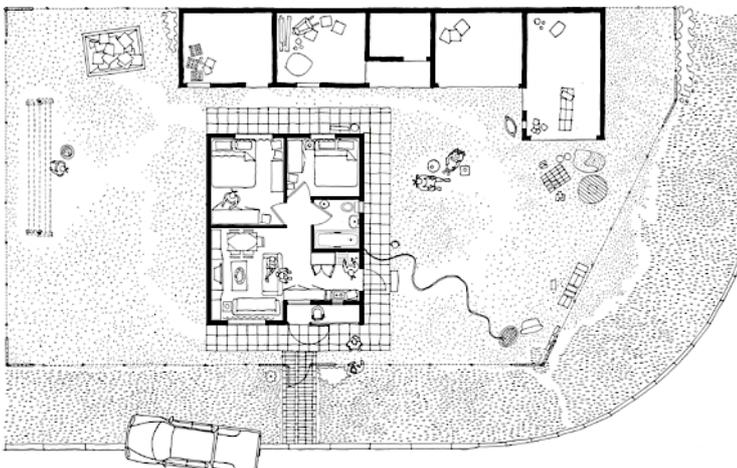
source: Lufhereng Post-occupancy Study for the Louisiana Museum of Modern Art, Denmark by 26'10 south Architects

PART 2_INTERFACE MODEL

Using the information you have produced in part 2 you are required to build a 1:20 model of a street in future Gobabis. You need to build the interface between public and private, showing the thresholds between. The future you portray should be neither utopian nor dystopian, but an intuitive response to what you would imagine as immediate, positive *constructions made by inhabitants themselves*.

All cities started as informal arrangements on the land at some stage. Can you visualise Gobabis as a more grown up city? Which aspects of life that the entire group documented can you imagine amplified? What form might this take? You need to model this reality as part of a street. With approximately 20 groups you will construct a street consisting of 20 plots or parcels. You street needs to be 6m wide with 3m wide pavements (which can be occupied or not). Plots with street frontages of 15m need to be arranged on either side of the street. Working in pairs, you need to script and build this reality in as much detail as you can, informed by the life world exercises.

Source: Spontaneous Urbanism Workshop by Prof. John Hoal and 26'10 south Architects held at Washington University in St Louis

Deliverable:

Again working in groups this time of three to four, you need to script and build a future version of Gobabis using the life worlds you studied. You need to work at 1:20 and construct the interface between public and private thereby creating a street. Imagine this as a main street which is built up because of the flows of traffic (pedestrian and other modes) supporting trade and services. Housing has to form part of this scenario. Each group needs to produce a parcel with a 15m street frontage. The depth of your parcel is up to you but should be at least 5m.
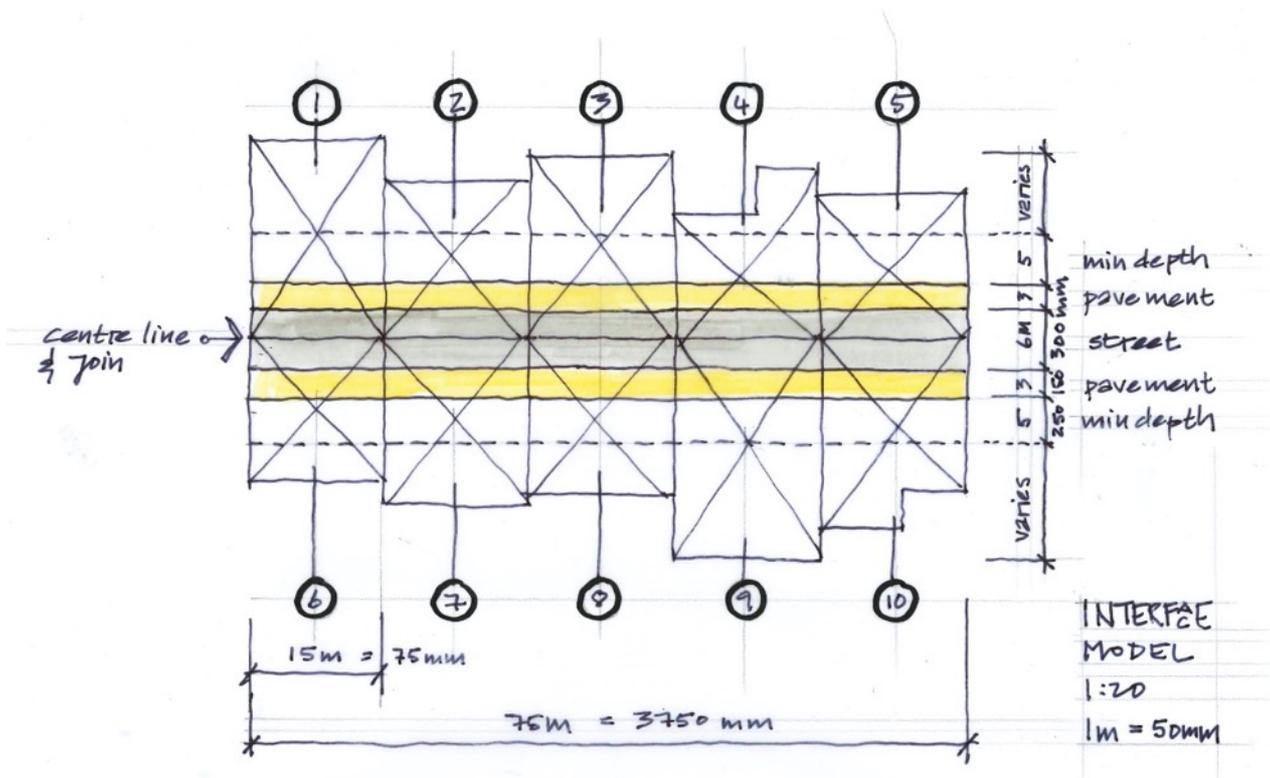

Diagram showing collective model

MODEL

- Base: minimum size 750mm x 450mm (you can add to this dim as needed) made of 2 layers of brown corrugated card. Road to be one layer and pavement second layer.
- Structures to be made of materials available.
- Create as much detail as possible.
- Imagine you are building a film set for a stop frame animation of Wakanda.
- Those with energy to spare can actually try making a stop frame animation.

TIMEFRAMES:

Day 1

- Departure to Gobabis
- Arrival in Gobabis
- Briefing
- Drawing
- Feedback
- Departure

Day 2

- Briefing in studio
- Build models
- Feedback
- School talk?
- Refine models
- Set up exhibition (I think its fine if they carry on working as part of exhibition)

TOOLS:
Scale ruler
Steel angle
Cutting knives
Cutting mats
Steel rulers
Pencils / erasers

MATERIALS:
Glue (wood glue and 'Pritt')
Foam board
White triplex
Brown corrugated card (can be old supermarket boxes)
Coloured paper (sugar paper)
Wood

ANNEX 2
Interactive Game methodology (USP-IHS)

This activity takes place in the context of the Urban Strategies and Planning programme, which consists of a group of 15 international students and interns developing 3 different games. These are namely: (a) South America: Ecuador: Latacunga; (b) Southern Africa: Namibia, Gobabis and (c) South Asia: India: Kerala; all of which face challenges in terms of their urban growth, sustainability and general development. A portfolio with all information accessible will be provided to the working groups.

NOTE: This process will be followed only by IHS participants, NUST participants will only participate in the interactive session where the game will be 'played' live with the participants from IHS through video conferencing.

Content of the game
All groups will develop a tabletop game such as a board game, a card game or alike, that represents a real case setting from the case studies. The possibility to apply a ludic approach towards these real scenarios and stakeholders should also help to discuss problem perceptions and decision-making critically. Game strategies can be combined but emphasis should be given to an easy comprehension of the game and its purpose. The game will evolve around a specific idea with a clear intention (aim of the game) and providing a range of options for the players (stakeholders) to involve and steer the progress of the game. On the play date, the basic game should be played within 40 minutes, however, for other occasions the game can take longer (e.g. playing several rounds etc.). USP participants will test their game in a mock playing session with fellow IHS Students.

Process
The games, their strategies and outlines will be developed throughout the course. Gaming sessions start with a workshop; in that week "real" stakeholders will be contacted and interviewed and serve as the blueprint for the roles played in the game. This includes local and central government officials, representatives of civil society and the private sector as well as academia. During the same, USP participants will be trained in approaching and interviewing these different realms of the urban society. Interviews will be conducted. Thereafter, rules and strategies for the games will be developed based on the findings from the assessments of stakeholders and their contexts. The game will be then tried out with peers during a mock game, then finalized and eventually played with real stakeholders participating online.

About the assignment
The specialization USP seeks to teach about the complexity of urban development and the possibilities to steer and manage urban dynamics. We depart from the notion that critical thinking is a core capacity of urban planning and management, and we aim to develop skills among the participants that enables them to deepen their understanding of complex scenarios in which planning and policy making take place. Urban planning is not just a task for the planner, it does require the participation of those that are relevant or affected by the plan – which is often the vast majority of urban stakeholders. To create an educational game meant to illustrate the conditions for urban sustainable development requires to assess and define the specific roles and contribution within planning, i.e. the game. In other words, an essential part of the game will be the players, i.e. the urban stakeholders.

Learning objectives
while developing and experiencing the game, participants will
develop the following capacities:

- conduct analytical assessments of urban stakeholders and agendas;
- Identify, propose and present strategies (including policies, programmes and planning tools) to solve problems associated with urban development;
- Engage and involve stakeholders, understand their positions and motivations. Assess principles of their actions and predict their behaviour in complex contexts;
- Apply theoretical and practical perspectives of socio-spatial urban development and explanatory frameworks provided by literature;
- Create recommendations in the form of a policy brief for a specific case that guides towards social inclusiveness and sustainability in urban development;
- Apply concepts and tools related to developing and implementing visions, strategies and projects that integrate social, environmental, economic, spatial, and institutional components of urban plans;
- Reflect on the qualities of plans and policies, the interests and values these plans and policies represent and their impact on existing dynamics;
- Come up with creative solutions by synthesizing and combining concepts and ideas that critically address socio-spatial dynamics in complex urban problems, individually and in team;
- Convincingly communicate ideas, plans and arguments, supported by theory, orally, visually and in writing;
- Facilitate a process of negotiated planning among several stakeholders.