



NAMIBIA
UNIVERSITY
OF SCIENCE AND
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Integrated Land Management Institute
Land, Livelihoods and Housing Programme

SEVEN IDEAS FOR INFORMAL SETTLEMENT UPGRADING IN NAMIBIA: Practical and implementable insights based on the SDI-UPFI High Level Roundtable, February 2019.

The following points are a synthesis of the ideas that transpired from the Shack/Slum Dwellers International and Urban Poor Fund International (SDI-UPFI) High Level Roundtable that took place at State House on February 14th, 2019. The session benefitted with inputs from local Namibian experts and stakeholders, as well as regional and international experts including Jane Weru, Executive Director Akiba Mashinani Trust (Kenya); Dr. Beth Chitekwe-Biti, Deputy Manager SDI, Former Director of Dialogue on Shelter (Zimbabwe); Rose Molokoane, Chairperson Shack Dwellers International (South Africa); and Kilion Nyambuga, Programme Officer, SDI Kenya (Kenya). The session also included the participation of a delegation of stakeholders from Liberia, led by Hon. Paulita C.C. Wie, Deputy Minister of Urban Affairs at the Ministry of Internal Affairs.

This paper further relies on two documents: "Unique Challenges faced by the youth in informal settlements", a report by the #BeFree Programme in Informal Settlements; and "Urban Land Reform in Namibia: Getting Ready for Namibia's Urban Future", a policy brief for the Second National Land Conference¹. All other references are indicated in footnotes.

The paper is co-developed by the Office of the First Lady, Republic of Namibia, and Guillermo Delgado at the Integrated Land Management Institute (ILMI) at the Namibia University of Science and Technology.

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PREAMBLE

NAMIBIA CAN DO IT.

Namibia's urban development is still at a point where it can be harnessed to bring equity and wellbeing for the largest number of inhabitants. At the same time, Namibia is one of the few countries worldwide that has recently passed the 50% urbanization rate; therefore, this is a strategic time to act. Considering the policy and institutional frameworks in place, as well as the remarkable record of community-led development, Namibia is well-positioned to change the course of its urban future. Organised communities have demonstrated the potential to undertake and lead informal settlement upgrading, which is a unique characteristic that should be central to the way Namibia approaches her urban future. The time is now for a national urbanisation plan that specifically targets the reversal of Apartheid-era spatial plans.

BRINGING EQUITY TO THE CORE OF URBAN DEVELOPMENT.

Most 'formal' urban development excludes low-income groups which, in Namibia, represent the largest segment of the population. Although Namibia has generally followed an urban development model which is predominantly dictated by what 'makes sense' for formal property markets, this has created a 'dual' development reality which leaves the majority in informal settlements disconnected from the benefits of urban life. Inclusionary policies and interventions are necessary to reverse these historical realities that so clearly continue to characterise Namibia's urban areas.

UPGRADING IS NOT ONLY ABOUT 'HOUSING', BUT ALSO ABOUT LIVELIHOODS.

Namibia is a stable economy, but when it has seen growth periods, such growth has not generated sufficient jobs. Today, most of those who are considered to be employed in Namibia find themselves within the informal economy. Therefore, upgrading should consider activating and supporting local/informal urban economies to sustain the areas that are being upgraded.

INNOVATE TO CREATE A NEW, AFROCENTRIC URBAN FUTURE FOR NAMIBIA'S YOUTH.

There is no need for further evidence that life in informal settlements constitutes a 'humanitarian crisis'. However, most of the obstacles that prevent innovation stem from an euro-centric concept of what towns and cities 'should be'. Considering that the places where we live transform ourselves, transforming the living conditions in informal settlements is an affirmation for a different and promising kind of future for Namibia's youth.



Roundtable participants after a courtesy call to President Geingob at State House.

¹Lühl, 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

1. SCALING UP BY COORDINATING EXISTING EFFORTS.

The idea of upgrading informal settlements through wide-ranging partnerships in Namibia is not new. In fact, Namibia stands out, both regionally and internationally for the achievements attained in this respect².

Current projects of informal settlement upgrading in Namibia improve the lives of thousands of households; however, the challenge is in the range of the hundreds of thousands³. Estimates show that at least 30,000 improved plots of land for housing are required every year to meet the challenge by 2030⁴.

A number of questions arise when scaling up; key among them: Who coordinates such efforts? The experiences of the Community Organizations Development Institute (CODI) in Thailand presents the case of a parastatal that deals exclusively with matters of upgrading of informal settlements; it coordinates these efforts and facilitates the transfer of central government funds directly to inhabitants to support their upgrading efforts⁵.

PROPOSAL 1-A:

COORDINATE EXISTING INITIATIVES THROUGH A NATIONAL ALLIANCE.

Considering Namibia's scale, institutional landscape, and existing policy framework, it is possible to scale up informal settlement upgrading by coordinating existing initiatives. Time has also allowed for the different projects to prove themselves⁶, so there is a general notion of what has worked. Coordinating efforts can be done by a body tasked with the sole purpose of scaling up existing initiatives of informal settlement upgrading, while proactive planning for new places for low-income inhabitants in urban areas. Importantly, these efforts shouldn't be seen as the task of one directorate, agency, or committee, but a national effort where everyone does their part. Professionals can contribute through pro bono work, councillors give special attention to this matter, universities can focus courses on this issue, and contractors can avail idle or underused machinery and staff.

PROPOSAL 1-B:

THE COORDINATING BODY SHOULD BE ABLE TO DIRECT PUBLIC FUNDS TO REACH THE IMPLEMENTATION LEVEL IN THE MOST DIRECT WAY.

For public funds to be put to the most direct use, they should reach the implementation level with the least amount of intermediaries. For the coordinating body to perform this function, it needs to be ring-fenced from the ordinary rhythms of government procedures to ensure that a task that is intrinsically inter-ministerial and inter-institutional is not construed within a silo. Namibia's remaining challenge is to upscale existing efforts and ensure they are rolled out throughout the country.



H.E. Hage G. Geingob, President of the Republic of Namibia



Madam Monica Geingos, First Lady of the Republic of Namibia

² This was universally acknowledged by participants from Kenya, Zimbabwe, South Africa and Liberia during the Roundtable discussions.

³ Land made available for informal settlement upgrading or development of housing for low-income groups accommodate usually less than 100 plots, and seldom exceeding 300; the largest development yet is Freedom Square in Gobabis, with about 1,000 households. However, the population of those living in informal settlements is estimated to reach almost a million people according to the latest Profile updated by the informal settlement communities and Shack Dwellers Federation of Namibia.

⁴ This number includes what would take to tackle current and future housing need using figures supplied by the Ministry of Urban and Rural Development and projections based on the Namibia Statistics Agency population estimates. See: Asino, K., & Christensen, Å. (2018). *Assessment of Housing Needs in Namibia (ILMI Working Paper No. 8)*. Windhoek: Integrated Land Management Institute. Retrieved from <http://ir.nust.na:80/xmlui/handle/10628/608>

⁵ Boonyabancha, S. (2005). Baan Mankong: Going to scale with "slum" and squatter upgrading in Thailand. *Environment and Urbanization*, 17(1), 21–46. Retrieved from <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/pdf/10.1177/095624780501700104>

⁶ The SDFN/NHAG efforts, as well as the National Housing Enterprise (NHE) and the Build Together Programme have been in operation for a similar period, as all were established around the time of independence. While a thorough comparative analysis of the three is still an outstanding task; there is a general awareness of the extent and limits of the three. See: 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>

2. IMPROVING LIVING CONDITIONS AND PLAN FOR FUTURE GROWTH.

Namibia needs a strategy that works in two directions: one that focuses on the one million people who are currently living in an informal settlement⁷, and one that proactively plans for the hundreds of thousands who that are set to arrive to urban areas in the coming decades⁸.

Currently, it is mainly the efforts of Shack Dwellers Federation of Namibia, supported by the Namibia Housing Action Group, and the Build Together Programme, that support the upgrading efforts of those living in informal settlements. Recently, Development Workshop, a newly-established NGO⁹, has started to develop affordable planned extensions for low-income groups; this, together with initiatives of some local authorities to plan new extensions for low-income newcomers in innovative ways¹⁰, represent the existing affordable measures that are dealing with the future growth in urban areas. In addition to informal settlement upgrading and new 'greenfield' extensions, urban infill projects can also contribute to ease the serviced land and housing shortage; both via PPPs and private developers. Inclusionary housing policies requiring a percentage of low-income units in new developments can help to create housing opportunities in better-located neighbourhoods in urban areas.

PROPOSAL 2-A: EMPOWER EXISTING NGOs TO SCALE UP TECHNICAL SUPPORT.

Existing NGOs are operating at their fullest capacity; considering that all efforts need to be increased several times, their capacity needs to be examined and expanded.

PROPOSAL 2-B: STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE FOR LOCAL AUTHORITIES AND COMMUNITIES FOR INFORMAL SETTLEMENT UPGRADING.

Despite the fact that Namibia has no 'National Informal Settlement Upgrading Programme', the urgency of the matter does not allow time to develop such programme and corresponding policy. Instead, an endorsed 'step-by-step' guide drawing from lessons learnt can create a common understanding on how to go about the process of upgrading.

PROPOSAL 2-C: REGIONAL TECHNICAL TEAMS.

It is only larger Local Authorities that employ adequate numbers of engineers, planners, and community development workers. The possibility of creating 'Regional Technical Teams' by the line Ministry of Urban and Rural Development to support smaller Local Authorities can be a strategic way to create technical capacity.

PROPOSAL 2-D: TAKE STEPS TOWARD MIXED-INCOME NEIGHBORHOODS AND URBAN INCLUSION.

New urban developments can be required to allocate a percentage of units for low-income groups, as it is the case in South Africa¹¹. As such policies would have to be developed first, they will not have immediate impact, and will only be relevant to the market-driven part of the housing sector.

⁷ This refers to the almost one million inhabitants living in informal settlements today. See 3

⁸ According to the UN World urbanization prospects 2018, Namibia will need to prepare for an additional 2 million inhabitants in urban areas alone in the coming three decades. See: 1, p. 5; as well as IOM. (2016). *Migration in Namibia. A country profile 2015*. Retrieved from International Organization for Migration website: https://d3rp5jatom3eyn.cloudfront.net/cms/assets/documents/Migration_In_Namibia_-_Acountry_Profile_2015.pdf, p.xiv

⁹ See: <http://dw-namibia.org/>

¹⁰ Examples of these are the 'planned extensions' that have been developed in Rehoboth and Otjiwarongo. For the example of Rehoboth, see: Esterhuizen, L. (2016). *Planned layouts v. 'planning for slums': the case of Rehoboth Ext. 5 & 6 [ILMI Document No. 3/2016]*. Windhoek: Integrated Land Management Institute. Retrieved from <http://ilmi.nust.na/sites/default/files/ESTERHUIZEN-On-Rehoboth-Ext-5-6-WEB.pdf>

¹¹ For the new Johannesburg inclusionary policy, see: Webster, D. (2019, February 22). New inclusionary housing policy shakes up Joburg. *New Frame*. Retrieved from <https://www.newframe.com/new-inclusionary-housing-policy-shakes-joburg>

3. MAKING STANDARDS REALISTIC SO THAT THEY CAN PROVIDE DIGNITY.

The President of the Republic of Namibia has formally declared the situation in informal settlements a humanitarian crisis. It is urgent that new and creative ways of expediting land delivery need to be considered and prioritized. Existing information on informal settlements, and not idealised visions anchored in middle-class aspirations, should guide standards and opportunities for upgrading; standards need to be adapted within the local context so that they can be put to their most beneficial use. While the new Urban and Regional Planning Act (URPA)¹² makes the process of land delivery more efficient, it is not a 'quick fix' solution for the scale and nature of the challenge. On the other hand, the Flexible Land Tenure Act (FLTA)¹³ promises to bring security of tenure within reach for the low-income groups¹⁴.

Kenya has shown that the recourse of 'Special Planning Areas' can help to recognise that some areas have special development challenges that cannot be met by applying existing standards and regulations¹⁵. This does not mean that all regulations should be suspended, but that some areas could be upgraded through case-sensitive guidelines. As Jane Weru succinctly mentioned during the round table: "We need standards that are realistic and that at the same time provide dignity".

PROPOSAL 3-A: ADJUST STANDARDS WHERE REQUIRED.

Through adequate coordination with local authorities, Namibia can explore the recourse of Ministerial exemptions to declare certain informal settlements 'special planning areas' to allow for on-site upgrading to avoid displacement, secure the tenure of inhabitants, install services in innovative ways, and ultimately allow for a new kind of urban design to emerge. Depending on the case, this can include:

- Flexibility regarding minimum road widths
- Flexibility regarding plot sizes and block erven
- Alternative housing typologies (pre-approved incremental house plans)
- Pro-poor land use regulations (mixed use allowing for home businesses)
- Relaxed minimum building values (remove minimum building values)
- Bulk land use changes (e.g. to allow for trade)
- Fast track approvals required for urban development (e.g. bulk applications)
- Employ existing tools innovatively to develop land (e.g. FLTA, sectional titles, long-term leasehold, affordable rental developments)

PROPOSAL 3-B: THINK OF FLEXIBLE LAND TENURE AS A BOTTOM-UP PROCESS.

Mobilise the Flexible Land Tenure Act for it to enable bottom-up upgrading in order to secure tenure gradually. The Act needs to be seen as a legislation that provides a social process framework and not merely a 'government procedure'. For it to become useful for this current crisis, immediate implementation is required in order to make upgrading efforts tenure-secure.

¹² The act was passed in 2018, but it can't yet be implemented as the regulations are still not yet gazetted.

¹³ The act was passed in 2012, were only gazetted in 2018; currently the first three pilots are Windhoek, Gobabis and Oshakati.

¹⁴ Currently, only three pilots are being supported: Oshakati, Windhoek and Gobabis.

¹⁵ UN-Habitat. (2017). *Too Pressed To Wait – Jane Weru, Executive Director Akiba Mashinani Trust*. Retrieved from <https://unhabitat.org/too-pressed-to-wait-jane-weru-executive-director-akiba-mashinani-trust/>

4. PRIORITISE THE NEEDS OF LOW-INCOME GROUPS.

Informal settlement upgrading needs to take national employment realities into account and make utilities and taxation sensitive to informal, home-based and underpaid workers, as well as the unemployed; including those who are economically active (e.g. grandparents taking care of children) and the working poor. The UN estimates that water costs should not exceed more than 5% of someone's monthly income¹⁶; considering the minimum wage of a domestic worker¹⁷, this should therefore not be more than N\$75. This serves as an example of how formalisation efforts need to take into account that charges cannot assume uniform purchasing power throughout urban areas.

The economics of urban development require re-thinking of local government finance and a national grant mechanism to support gradual subsidies for making utilities and taxes affordable for the low-income groups.

PROPOSAL 4-A: PROGRESSIVE PRICING SYSTEM FOR UTILITIES.

Through close engagement with Local Authorities, finance mechanisms can be promoted to progressively increase the costs of utilities to allow for a 'soft start' for inhabitants of informal settlements that are being upgraded.

PROPOSAL 4-B: PRE-PAID SYSTEMS ALLOWING HOUSEHOLDS TO CONTROL SPENDING OF SERVICES.

Inhabitants in informal settlements fear that their bills for utilities and taxes will pile up, eventually leading them to give up their property due to default in payments. Pre-paid systems can allow for households to have better control over their finances, and although they may require an initial investment, a system of repayment can be embedded in the cost of the utilities to make it accessible for low-income households.

PROPOSAL 4-C: INDIVIDUAL BASIC SERVICES, COLLECTIVE EXTENDED SERVICES.

While the objective is for every household to eventually enjoy all available services, incremental development requires services to be developed in a gradual fashion. A way to dignify existing conditions in the shortest possible time is to deploy 'collective service modules' to enable access to an extended array of services to those living within areas that are being upgraded; these can include showers, laundry, sanitation, as well as other needs identified by communities through participatory dynamics. These would nevertheless need to be 'community-planned, built, managed and maintained'¹⁸ in order to secure ownership and sustainability.



Katrina Shimbulu, President of the Association of Local Authorities in Namibia



Laura McLeod-Katjirua, Governor of the Khomas Region

¹⁶ See: UN. (undated). *The Human Right to Water and Sanitation (Media Brief)*. United Nations. Retrieved from http://www.un.org/waterforlifedecade/pdf/human_right_to_water_and_sanitation_media_brief.pdf; and Mitlin, D., & Walnycki, A. (2016). *Why is water still unaffordable for sub-Saharan Africa's urban poor? (Briefing)*. IIED. Retrieved from <http://pubs.iied.org/pdfs/173531IIED.pdf>

¹⁷ The 2017 national minimum wage for domestic workers is N\$1 502.05 per month. See: Republic of Namibia. (2017). *Government Gazette of the Republic of Namibia (Government Gazette No. 6428)*. Windhoek: Republic of Namibia. Retrieved from <http://www.mol.gov.na/documents/24911/476717/Wage+Order+for+Domestic+Workers.pdf/076d627c-efc7-4fed-b216-d39e6edb7215>

¹⁸ See some cases on sanitation in India for an expanded notion of collectivised infrastructure: Burra, S., Patel, S., & Kerr, T. (2003). Community-designed, built and managed toilet blocks in Indian cities. *Environment and Urbanization*, 15(2), 11–32. Retrieved from: <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/pdf/10.1177/095624780301500202>

5. RE-THINK LAND AVAILABILITY.

It takes over a dozen processes for land to officially become 'serviced land'¹⁹; it is also estimated that servicing a plot of land of 300m² can cost N\$85,000²⁰ on average. Again, this excludes the majority of Namibians; in view of the established urgency, creative forms of accessing land for low-income groups must be developed. Key to this is the optimal utilisation of unused and underutilised land²¹.

Namibia needs to mobilise all land that is available to tackle this 'humanitarian crisis'. This cannot be reduced to 'greenfield development' (i.e. extending the city horizontally by developing neighbouring [peri-urban] land) nor upgrading areas that are already occupied. There needs to be a wide-ranging audit of unused and under-utilised land within urban areas, to allow for better-located areas to be made accessible for the benefit of low-income groups. This is in line with the resolutions at the Second National Land Conference, and it could furthermore significantly change the face of Namibia's urban areas, which were shaped by the Apartheid spirit of racial segregation. Mixed-income neighbourhoods can help to build the new Namibian society. For low-income groups, and especially the youth, this can create proximity to economic opportunities and exposure to different ways of life²²; for higher-income groups, it can create opportunities to engage with the various realities in the country today.

Namibia's advantage, differently from other countries in Sub-Saharan Africa, is that most informal settlements are found on public or municipal land; and also much of the unused and underutilised land is also public or municipal land. This is an advantage in the sense that public intervention is easier without the need of purchasing or expropriating private land. For example, Mukuru Special Planning Area, the case that Jane Weru and Kilion Nyambuga, from Kenya, presented at the Roundtable, was privately-owned land that was left unused for speculative purposes.

PROPOSAL 5-A: IDENTIFY UNUSED AND UNDERUTILISED LAND AND ALLOCATE IT FOR LOW-INCOME HOUSING AND PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE.

This audit can be done by the coordinating body in close collaboration with Local Authorities and the Deeds Office at the Ministry of Land Reform.

PROPOSAL 5-B: IF UNUSED AND UNDERUTILISED LAND IS PUBLIC (CENTRAL OR LOCAL GOVERNMENT), FAST-TRACK RELEASE OF SUCH LAND.

This process can be done through national coordination with Local Authorities and Central Government in order to allow for negotiation and mutual benefit.

PROPOSAL 5-C: IF UNUSED AND UNDERUTILISED LAND IS PRIVATE, NEGOTIATE WITH OWNERS AND IN SOME CASES EXPLORE THE RECOURSE OF EXPROPRIATION.

This process can be done in partnership with private sector organisations in order to attain a common understanding and make this a process engendering unity of purpose, instead of division.

PROPOSAL 5-D: CREATE MECHANISM FOR PUBLIC LAND HOLDINGS OF UNUSED AND UNDERUTILISED LAND.

Explore possibilities for the release of unused and underutilised land to avoid being a once-off 'privatisation' releasing additional land into a 'property market' that may later increase again the values to a point where land becomes unaffordable once more. Experiences with community land trusts that make land 'permanently affordable' can be examined in order for this measure to create a significant pool of land where public interests can leverage against market forces that are subject to imperatives other than equity.

¹⁹ See: Genis, P. (2015). *The Proposed New Urban and Regional Planning Bill (ILMI Document Note No. 1/2015)*. Windhoek: Integrated Land Management Institute. Retrieved from <http://ilmi.nust.na/sites/default/files/ILMI-GENIS-The-proposed-new-Urban-and-Regional-Planning-Bill.pdf>; and Ulrich, J., & Meurers, D. (2015). *The Land Delivery Process in Namibia. A legal analysis of the different stages from possession to freehold title*. Retrieved from GIZ website: <http://www.the-eis.com/data/literature/The%20land%20delivery%20process%20in%20Namibia.pdf>

²⁰ See 1

²¹ This was included in one of the resolutions on urban land at the Second National Land Conference.

²² Point 2. Unemployment, Poverty, Hunger, of the #BeFree Programme in Informal Settlements report, shows that youth in informal settlements tend "not [to] aspire to reach further than their parents/care takers".

6. WHILE INDIVIDUAL HOUSEHOLDS ARE UPGRADED, SAFE/NURTURING PUBLIC SPACES WILL ENABLE THE YOUTH TO PREPARE ITSELF FOR NEW OPPORTUNITIES/CHALLENGES TO COME.

At the moment, the best public infrastructure in Namibia is found in centrally-located neighbourhoods which, due to the apartheid planning of the past, are far from low-income areas where inhabitants are particularly vulnerable to high and increasing transportation costs. Libraries for studying and doing homework, community centres to host information sessions, sports grounds for youth to join a club, clinics to get medicine or counselling, parks for a family to be able to spend a Sunday afternoon²³; these are the spaces where public investment can have a significant impact besides the infrastructure provided for individual households. Considering that individual households in informal settlements have numerous deprivations (e.g. no electricity, no sanitation facility, limited indoor and outdoor space, especially in areas of higher densities), public infrastructure is fundamental to give a head-start to those whose area will still take some years to upgrade. Such public infrastructure can be 'co-produced and managed' in partnership with inhabitants in order to relieve the pressures for upkeep on Local Authorities. As Rose Molokoane, herself also a member of a saving group in a settlement near Johannesburg, mentioned about local communities in her intervention: "We are not 'end users', we are partners".

PROPOSAL 6-A: A NEW KIND OF 'CO-PRODUCED' PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE.

Community-planned, built, managed and maintained public infrastructure is a modality that has demonstrated to work for sanitation purposes²⁴; this can be explored to develop different kinds of public spaces: from sanitation modules, to communal spaces for meetings, and sports grounds.

PROPOSAL 6-B: UPGRADING SHOULD ALSO CONSIDER URBAN DESIGN AS A WAY TO MAKE NEIGHBOURHOODS SAFE AND VIBRANT.

The road that a child needs to walk to school²⁵ might not automatically be safer through upgrading. Therefore, urban design considerations creating storefronts, pedestrian streets, and other spatial measures, need to be part of the upgrading process to make the new upgraded neighbourhoods safe and liveable.



Dr Anna Muller, National Coordinator, Namibia Housing Action Group



Jane Weru, Executive Director, Akiba Mashinani Trust (Kenya)

²³ Point 13. Lack of access to facilities, of the #BeFree Programme in Informal Settlements report, lists a number of deprivations in informal settlements as well as some of the impacts of these. See: NSA. (2016). *The Namibia Labour Force Survey 2016 Report*. Windhoek: Namibia Statistics Agency. Retrieved from https://cms.my.na/assets/documents/Labour_Force_Survey_-_20161.pdf

²⁴ See 18

²⁵ Point 1. Land of sanitation and electricity, of the #BeFree Programme in Informal Settlements report, shows that school children in informal settlements find themselves in vulnerable situations on their road to school.

7. CREATE A NATIONAL URBAN CAMPAIGN.

No one should be left behind in the new urban development of Namibia. The stigma that urban areas bear is in part due to the harsh conditions of informal settlements. However, the right to urban life presents a wide array of possibilities to propel Namibia's youth to new horizons. Considering that of the population still lives in rural areas, and that millions are yet to come, it cannot be assumed that knowledge of how to live in a city is a given. This applies to newcomers as well to those who are already living in cities but not yet entirely familiar with regulations, recurrent payments, as well as other rights and obligations. Therefore, in a similar spirit as the World Urban Campaign, there may be a need for a 'National Urban Campaign' to acquaint everyone with the possibilities and challenges of life in urban areas.

PROPOSAL 7-A: NATIONAL URBAN CAMPAIGN.

Urban land reform requires that those that are involved are familiar with principles of urban development. Therefore, an 'urban pedagogy programme' for urban residents, the youth, community-based organizations and other interested parties should be a flanking mechanism to scaling up informal settlement upgrading nation-wide.

PROPOSAL 7-B: 'URBAN PEDAGOGY' PROGRAMME FOR COUNCILORS AND PUBLIC SERVANTS.

New programmes can be established in cooperation with higher education institutions, such as NUST, the University of Namibia (UNAM), and the Namibia Institute for Public Administration and Management (NIPAM) to train councillors and other public officials on the fundamentals of urban development.



High level round-table



Guillermo Delgado, round-table moderator



Discussion during courtesy call to President Geingob



Nghidinua Daniel, Executive Director (left) and Hon. Dr. Peya Mushelenga, Minister (right); Ministry of Urban and Rural Development

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SDI UPFI High Level Roundtable

Minutes Sdi Upfi High Level Roundtable Held at The State House Banquet Hall, In Windhoek on Thursday, 14 February 2019.

Present:**OFFICE OF THE FIRST LADY (OFL)**

Madame Monica Geingos
Dr Veronica Theron
Meunajo Tjiroze
Uajorokisa Akwenye
Delinda Hanes
Leena Shimpanda
Renata Solomons

INTERNATIONAL DELEGATE

Hon. Paulita CC Wie
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Leona Monger
Marie Yarway
George Glaye
Jane Weru
Killion Nyambuga
Beth Chitekwe-Biti
Rose Molokoane
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Hon. Dr Peya Mushelenga, MP
Hon. Pricilla Beukes
Hon. Laura McLeod Katjirua
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INTRODUCTION

1. The Office of the First Lady, in Partnership with the Slum Dwellers International (SDI), Shack Dwellers Federation of Namibia (SDFN) and Namibia Housing Action Group (NHAG) held a High-Level Roundtable discussion on 14 February 2019. Key objectives for the Roundtable were to address the strategies that remove obstacles for affordable land and shelter and deliberating on fast-tracking development in informal settlements through the setting up viable finance models. The focus of the Roundtable was centred on ensuring that the informal settlement upgrading is community-driven and participatory by providing strategies that remove the obstacles for affordable land and shelter. Likewise, evaluating finance models for scaling up incremental community-driven housing construction.

2. Approximately 40 participants representing central and local government, non-governmental agencies, academia and international representatives in organizations dealing with land distribution and development attended the meeting. In the welcoming remarks, Madame Geingos re-iterated the importance of opening communication channels through discussions such as these and reminded everyone of their vital role as implementers of policy. Madame Geingos underlined important issues including distinguishing between low-cost and low-income housing.

3. In the opening remarks, Dr Anna Muller, Director of the NHAC, emphasized the importance of different stakeholders collaborating with and assisting the government in dealing with the issue of high housing prices.

SUMMARY KEY LEARNINGS

4. Dr Beth Chitekwe-Biti, Co-ordinator of the SDI Secretariat, and Mr George Glaye, SDI Federation Data Coordinator, shared the global perspective of Informal Settlement upgrading in Pakistan, Thailand and Zimbabwe. Dr Chitekwe-Biti highlighted that success can only be achieved at the intersection of government, the poor and civil society. Through the Upgrading Proposal, various viable solutions were found for informal settlements within larger cities and a number of mechanisms were established by governments which directly addressed the challenges faced by people. In this context, the government provided funding to organized groups in collaboration with different community organisations and established "city development committees" expediting the building of houses.

5. Mr Glaye shared insights on the Liberian perspective of informal settlement upgrading, emphasizing the importance of research and needs assessments driven by communities within informal settlements. Through the SDI's transnational network of slum dweller federations, Saving Groups operating from within the settlements, were established to collectively drive a bottom-up development agenda on both city and national levels. The SDI Federation has to date developed 171 Savings Groups in 20 slum communities. A key objective of the Federation is to collect data and use it as an advocacy tool to negotiate with government and key partners. Upon a question posed to Mr Glaye on how to limit the taxes claimed by the municipalities for the services resulting from the formalisation of informal settlements, he responded that while taxation mechanisms are expected, governments should take into account the economic standing of the people living in these communities. Cllr Rachel Jacobs, stated that housing is a constitutional right and further noted the need for effective strategic policies as an imperative towards the provision of housing for all. She concluded by encouraging communities to play an active role in offering valuable policy inputs.

6. Ms Jane Weru, Executive Director of the Akiba Mashinani Trust (Kenya), shared the best practices on the Kenyan experience of informal upgrading, with a special focus on a case study carried out in the Mukuru informal settlement (Kenya). Key learnings were:

- Problems unique to informal settlements cannot be solved if they are not understood;
- Community-led research is important to guide appropriate solutions and identify problems;
- Developmental problems cannot be solved using conventional methods;
- An alternative developmental model is required for the unique problems in informal settlements.

7. Ms Weru noted that the Kenyan model in Kibera of small groupings could be used as a tool to better coordinate solutions toward addressing youth-specific challenges, particularly youth in informal settlements. She further noted the importance of developing solutions which are community-focused and encouraged the Namibian nation to develop alternative standards responding to the needs of the poor.

8. On a question posed on how information collection is directed in Kenya, Ms Weru responded that community houses have been organised into groups of 10 households, each with appointed representatives attending to consultations, reporting on identified problems and ensuring ground-level issues are heard. She further highlighted those social problems addressed in the provision of housing are based on short term plans, aimed at addressing immediate issues such as the lack of water and sanitation and finding realistic solutions. She concluded her remarks by noting that the needs of individuals in the informal settlement are not the same needs of those living in other urban areas. The Mukuru community does not own cars, and the emphasis has been placed on public transport as an immediate need as opposed to roads that take up space in a dense area.

9. Rose Molokoane, Chairperson of Shack Dwellers International (SDI), shared best practices of the People's Housing Process in South Africa, which through continuous engagement with policymakers, developed a Poor People Land Policy to inform rural and urban development of the needs of those in informal settlements. She underlined the importance of advocacy in that it has resulted in a strengthened partnership with the SDI and the South African government which led to improved basic services in informal settlements. The People's Housing Processes in South Africa have signed a memorandum of agreement (MoA) with the Durban Municipality to address the upgrading of informal settlements. An important aspect of the MoA is that it addresses both housing and the other social needs of those living in informal settlements. In her closing remarks, Ms Molokoane pleaded with the Namibian government and local authorities to consider a discount on the price of land offered to the poor in society and provide for affordable monthly payments on water and electricity meters.

10. Mr Heinrich Amushila, Co-Director of the Namibia Housing Action Group (NHAG), shared a presentation on the example set in upgrading informal settlements in Gobabis. He emphasised the importance of consultative planning and partnerships with communities in order to up-scale the Gobabis model across informal settlements in Namibia. He further informed that the local authority signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with the community for the initiation of the informal settlement upgrading. The NHAG harnessed intern resources from institutions such as the Namibia University of Science and Technology (NUST), whose students majoring in planning studies assisted in the drafting of plans for the settlement upgrades. NHAG trained 400 people in the community on water installation systems, empowering and enabling the community to take ownership of their own community development. Mr Amushila called on government and municipal officials to get involved in the ground-work which will inform and enable them to achieve more.

11. Ms Elizabeth Amakali, Khomas Regional SDFN Facilitator and direct beneficiary of the NHAG-SDFN programme, gave a real-life example of her own 150m² house which she proudly refers to as her "mansion". She used this example to address the need for an incremental approach to plot size allocation, a sentiment shared by Mr Robert Kahimise, CEO of the City of Windhoek. Ms Amakali presented images of her house demonstrating that it is possible to provide decent housing on a smaller sized erf. She urged the government and municipal officials to include people living in informal settlements in the town planning to eliminate delays in the building of houses.

12. Ms Inga Boye, Regional facilitator of the SDFN, shared that the main challenges faced by the SDFN in providing decent housing, is the lack of land allocated for settlement and land size limitations, which would cause more than 50% of members of the SDFN need to be relocated. She further underlined that to date, the SDFN has established 808 saving groups with a total of N\$29 million in savings and built 5,000 units since its establishment.

13. Key-note remarks by Honourable Dr Peya Mushelenga, Minister of Urban and Rural Development, highlighted the challenges created by rapid urbanization and the growth of informal settlements should be regarded as a humanitarian crisis. The Namibian housing sector is characterised by informal settlements, high-cost housing and infrastructure, and little financial support for the poor. The Minister reiterated that the solutions to housing challenges shouldn't be left to government alone, as it is a collective responsibility including the private sector and citizens. He closed off his remarks by underlining the need for a decentralised approach to the issue of housing and land, and that the MURD will continue to provide funding to local authorities to upscale land servicing and housing development projects.

CONCLUSION

14. The intent behind the round table was to provide policy makers and implementers with shovel ready concepts. There is a clear disconnect between what the poor need and what politicians want. A consensus that the upgrading of informal settlements is possible through enhanced community participation and end-user focused solutions was established and a call was made for a land policy informed by communities in informal settlements.

The roundtable adjourned at 14:00.



The Integrated Land Management Institute is a centre of the Faculty of Natural Resources and Spatial Sciences (FNRSS) at the Namibia University of Science and Technology (NUST) committed to develop reputable and multidisciplinary research and public outreach activities in the field of land, administration, property, architecture and spatial planning.

The Land, Livelihoods and Housing Programme aims to deepen and expand the focus of these three key issues in Namibia. The programme was developed to guide ILMI's activities by organising it in four aspects: institutional, environmental, fiscal and spatial processes.

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