Public Outreach Strategy:
Useful knowledge
Contributing to the land, livelihoods and housing questions in Namibia in a socially-relevant way.

"Land, Livelihoods, and Housing" Programme
ILMI Integrated Land Management Institute
and the Depatment of Land and Property Sciences

2015-17

∏ NAMIBIA UNIVERSITY
OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Why "Useful knowledge"?
Background

Traditionally, the research process tends to be a linear one, where public outreach is often placed at the end of the sequence. This effectively reduces its potentials to merely the effect of "an announcement", rather than exploring its capacities of establishing a dialogue between researchers and a variety of publics. This has to do only partly with a lack of resources, and more with the inability to bridge the gap between ordinary inhabitants and the specialized (often high-level) publics that are traditionally the public of research outputs.

Furthermore, the vast majority of research activities take place not only within the larger cities, but also in the central and privileged areas that contain infrastructure facilities (i.e. auditoriums, libraries, universities). The current reality of Namibia is such that those having access to these spaces are not only a minority, but also often those to whom the issues at stake are not a matter of survival. *Extended geographical inclusion* would be therefore required to engage and develop presence beyond these spaces of privilege and trigger a conversation between ILMI and a wider constituency.

In order to start grasping the notion of "useful knowledge" it is crucial to diversify the variety of publics in terms of: age, income, gender, occupation, language, amongst others (see list below). That knowledge that is relevant and useful to this widened definition of "public" is what in this case will be considered "useful knowledge". For ILMI to attain its objectives of meaningfully engage with the questions it has itself set in its Research Programme and realistically expect a different prospect than other previous and currently-existing efforts to address the matter, it is argued that such an approach would be required.

The fundamental need of a public outreach program
Introduction

The principle behind this public outreach programme is for it to be an inseparable component of research efforts, in order to: a) embed research efforts in the everyday lives of the constituencies to whom the programme themes concern, b) enrich the research programme with the nuances grasped by innovative interaction methods between researchers and inhabitants, and c) to democratize the production of otherwise specialized-academic knowledge and turning it into *useful knowledge* capable of being relevant and handy to ordinary inhabitants.

REACHING A WIDENED RANGE OF PUBLICS *(From left to right)* Legacies of a Colonial town exhibition at the Soweto Public Market in Windhoek, 2013, source: Phillip Lühl; Keleketla! After School Program in Johannesburg, South Africa, source: Facebook; Spoken Word, at the Warehouse, Windhoek, source: Facebook.

Lecture on 'Global South Urbanisms' by Dr. Henrik Ernstson

Preparing a fertile field for actually-existing exchange
Objective

To run a public outreach program that is permanent, comprehensive, and inclusive in order to establish a researcher-public interface geared at producing research outputs that are embedded in on-going socio-spatial processes and useful to a widened definition of "public".

Towards socially-relevant academic institutions
Strategy

The strategy is relatively simple:

    a) to expand *geographically,*
    b) to diversify the variety of publics, and
    c) to make this effort permanent.

This necessitates innovative ways of engaging; a few initial ideas regarding this are outlined below. To achieve all this, it is proposed to engage with different practitioners (community workers, cultural organizations, neighbourhood-based institutions) and colleagues (students and faculty from our as well as other schools and institutions) in order to undertake this task. The program will be explicitly a low-cost undertaking, only occasionally requesting support from outside partners for larger commitments (e.g. conference).

Expanding the definition of "public"
Partners

The program will aim not only at a wide and variegated definition of the public, but also at responsibly addressing the actually-existing social reality and calibrate the program in such a way that it remains in permanent dialogue with this expanded definition of "the public". It is therefore that the program will aim at addressing publics that are variegated in terms of: age (youth, adults); income (unemployed, low-income, middle-income, professionals, elites); geography (towns and cities, rural areas); gender; practice (construction, labour, agriculture, civil society); discipline (legal studies, planning, architecture, economics, sociology, geography, health, engineering, environmental studies); and also that it both addresses and/or reaches a variety of scales (international, regional, national, municipal).

The strategy will keep active contact with both bottom-up structures as well as power brokers through a variety of ways, which may include mass media (e.g. TV, radio) and social networks.

It is also important to note that the program will also aim at engaging colleagues from the School of Natural Resources and Spatial Sciences (SNRSS), other schools at the Namibia University of Science and Technology (NUST), as well as outside institutions that are related to the issues laid out in the Research Programme.

INCLUSIVE FROMS OF ENGAGEMENT *(From left to right)* "Everyday life in informal settlements" public interactive session at the National Art Gallery of Namibia, 2013; "Ubuntu Park" development of community-organized public space in Soweto, South Africa, source: Ubuntu Park wordpress; film screenings and discussions with mineworkers in Swakopmund, source: AfricAvenir Namibia.

Field visit to Windhoek informal settlements with Prof. Stig Enemark

Strengthening civic socio-spatial capacities
Activities (preliminary)

The list below contains a set of preliminary ideas that would be in need of further calibration when the concrete projects and publics are further defined.

Throughout-the-week intra-university roster
Brown bag lunch talks
After-school *conversatories*

Popular education
Civic commons: useful knowledge for wider publics
Production of manuals and posters

Public gatherings
Occasional fairs and exhibitions

Student-led activities
Collaboration with NASA, SRCs

Citizen-led activities
Co-organized events, activities and projects

The previous can entail cultural activities (e.g. film screenings, theatre plays), production of didactic materials (e.g. manuals, radio shows), itinerant exhibitions, etc. Specific outputs can entail any of the following: events, such as workshops, public dialogues, 'brown bag' lunches; printed, such as working paper series, pamphlets, posters; digital, such as social media, repository, web-based platforms (video, audio, photography).

SOCIALLY-ORIENTED OUTPUTS *(From left to right)* Self-released publications by Keleletla! Public Library, South Africa; logo of the Labour Resource and Research Institute's campaign, done in collaboration with the College of the Arts, Windhoek, Namibia; informative comics by the Legal Assistance Centre, Namibia.
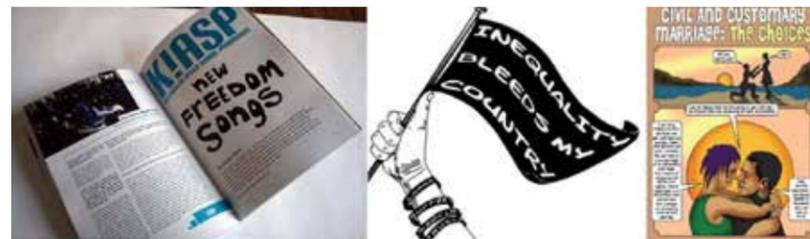
"Nothing about us, without us, if for us"
Matrix between components and public

Preliminary timeline

The proposed public program aims at being at having an annual cycle, at the end upon which a larger event will take place.

	Events			Printed media			Digital		
	Workshops	Public dialogues	Brown bag'	W. paper series	Pamphlets	Posters	Social media	Repository	Web
Age									
Youth									
Adults									
Income									
Unemployed									
Low-income									
Middle-income									
Higher-income									
Geography									
Towns and cities									
Rural areas									
Gender									
Male									
Female									
Scale									
Planetary									
Africa									
Southern Africa									
Namibia									
Regions									
Municipalities									
Practice									
Construction									
Labour									
Agriculture									
Civil society									
Disciplines									
Law									
Economics									
Architecture									
Sociology									
Planning									
Engineering									
Geography									
Env. sciences									
Health									

to be completed vis-à-vis the themes and topics

ABOUT ILMI

The Integrated Land Management Institute is a centre of the School of Natural Resources and Spatial Sciences (SNRSS) 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.

http://ilmi.nust.na

Tel: +264 61 207 2483
Fax +264 61 207 9483

ilmi@nust.na

NAMIBIA UNIVERSITY
OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY