Land, Livelihoods and Housing
Working paper

A Bibliography: The Urban Question in Namibia

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1. Introduction

Namibia is shifting towards becoming an urban based society, with strong urban growth rates during the last two decades. Although rural homes, land and linkages remain crucial, it is towards the urban and peri-urban settlements that people gravitate and where the most lives are lived, and livelihoods sought and created. This urban growth is accompanied by growing demands for serviced land and infrastructure, tenure security, housing, sanitation, and transport – and by complex, creative, and contested shifts in demographics, economies, ecologies, relations, and public life. For one, urban growth is entrenching existing inequalities in urban landscapes still wrestling with colonial and apartheid socio-spatial legacies and segregation, high rates of unemployment, poverty, and insecurity. At the same time, it is generating new forms of exclusion, including unequal access to information and communication technologies and food security, and the privatisation of urban public space and land. Despite these developments, research on urbanisation, urban development and urban socio-spatial dynamics within Namibia remain limited, somewhat unknown, and largely underfunded.

The aim of this bibliography is to provide an overview of existing literature on urban development in Namibia, to highlight the changing trends in urban research and knowledge production, and to illuminate the gaps and opportunities for future research. Moreover, in creating this bibliography we hope to further foster dialogue and engagement between disparate and past and present scholars and urban practitioners, and across the disciplinary boundaries and silos. And lastly, given the trends towards urban growth, this bibliography can inform more critical and historically-situated debates and discussions on how we imagine, know, live, perceive, manage, and plan this growth – including in relation to concerns for inclusion, sustainability, equality, co-production and decoloniality. The bibliography is by no means exhaustive. It does however introduce seminal and current publications and the main institutions driving past and present urban research.

This bibliography was created in the context of a grant agreement between the Namibia University of Science and Technology (NUST) and the German Cooperating Agency (Deutsche Gesellschaft fur Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ)) on "sustainable and inclusive urban development". The implementation of this agreement is facilitated by the Integrated Land Management Institute (ILMI) at NUST. The Grant Agreement supports a set of activities, including to "initiate an applied research programme". In this context, the compilation of the bibliography benefited greatly from much support and collaboration. Research and technical support in creating the bibliography were provided by Mersiana Shatyohamba, the project assistant. Conceptual, administrative, and coordinating support were provided by the ILMI staff, specifically the Land, Livelihoods and Housing Programme Coordinator, Dr Guillermo Delgado, and the Administrative Assistant, Emorgen Jansen. Sylvia Umana, the Senior Library Assistant at the NUST Library's Digital Collections, took on the vital task of creating and establishing the digital repository (ongoing). And lastly, Mario Siukuta, a student assistant, aided during a one-day workshop. The methodology is outlined in more detail below.

2. Methodology

This bibliography was compiled through an extensive online search, and through drawing on personal, digital, and institutional archives between 8th of October and 30th of November 2021. Key databases and archives consulted are listed below:

- *National Archives of Namibia*: A database comprising a comprehensive range of publications, theses, and grey literature. The NAMLIT (Namibian Literature) database is only available at the archives.
- *Basler Afrika Bibliographien* (Namibia Resource Centre, Southern African Library): A centre of documentation and expertise on Namibia and southern Africa, located in Basel, Switzerland. Online databases available: https://baslerafrikabibliographien.faust-web.de/.
- *The Namibian Digital Repository*: A valuable collection of digitalised Namibia sources. The repository was established by the Namibian-based historian Bernie Moore. https://www.namibiadigitalrepository.com.
- *Namibia Scientific Society Library in Windhoek*: A comprehensive library on Namibian and southern Africa studies, including several publications by the Namibian Scientific Society itself. Online catalogue available: https://www.namscience.com/library.
- *Namibia University of Science and Technology* (NUST) digital repositories and library: https://library.nust.na/.
- *The University of Namibia* (UNAM) digital repository and library: https://www.unam.edu.na/library.
- *Environment Information Service (EIS)* E-Library: http://the-eis.com/elibrary/search/2397.
- *The Habitat Resource and Development Centre Library* in Katutura, Windhoek.

Additionally, a one-day long virtual and in-person workshop was organised in Windhoek on the 17th of November 2021. The workshop invited several past and present scholars on urban Namibia to participate in a reflexive exercise on the changing nature of urban knowledge production and to provide input into the draft bibliography. Participants included international and past scholars of urban Namibia, including Dr David Simon and Dr Fatima Müller-Friedman, Namibian urban and development practitioners, specifically Dr Anna Muller, and emerging Namibian-based scholars, including Dr Guillermo Delgado, Dr Phillip Lühl, Dr Ellison Tjirera, and PhD-candidates Stephanie Roland and Nashilongweshipwe Mushaandja. The workshop process informed the framing of this bibliography, as well as its structure and content. Subsequent input from a set of reviewers is also gratefully acknowledged. The reviewers included Guillermo Delgado, Anna Muller, David Simon, Catharina Nord, Henning Melber, and Nashilongweshipwe Mushaandja.

The time frame structuring this bibliography is between 1964-2021. This time frame was chosen for practical reasons, but also because it was in 1964 that the infamous Odendaal Report was published following the Commission of Inquiry into South West Africa (SWA) (1962-1963). This report ushered in wide-ranging territorial and socio-spatial re-structuring based on the grand apartheid ideology of "separate development" and signified a crucial moment in which SWA was comprehended as one planning unit. Nevertheless, some sources from before 1964 are also included, such as the government ethnological reports published during the 1950s, and some earlier literature and archival sources.

Given the time and resource constraints, a thorough archival engagement was not possible. However, we hope that the inclusion of these few sources provides an indication of the scope of the urban question, including themes such as the histories of migrant labour and urban compounds, the divergent trajectories of the different mining, harbour, diamond, railway and military towns, and the colonial development of infrastructure and industrial assemblages.

The bibliography is divided into two time periods: **1950-1990 (pre-independence)** and **1990-2021 (post-independence).** Moreover, for each time period, sources are divided into **four broad types:**

1. Government and parastatal reports
2. International organisational and institutional reports and research publications
3. Namibia organisational and institutional reports and research publications
4. Academic publications thematic, conference publications & theses

Sub-categories and references under each section are organised alphabetically (apart from the conference papers and theses section under academic publications). Given the four types above, some of the references are thus organised according to the institutions/countries where they were produced, while others are organised thematically under academic publications. This was done to highlight the changing international and local institutional landscapes and their role in shaping the urban research agenda in Namibia. Given the limitations of creating a textual bibliography, the types and the thematic categories generated should be seen as a guide rather than a rigid classification system. Thematic categories overlap in many instances, with most publications falling within multiple categories. Accompanying the bibliography will be the creation of a digital repository with the NUST Library. This will allow for references to be organised according to multiple categories and types and to hopefully highlight further connections and patterns between them.

Apart from the **two main sections (pre- and post-independence sources)**, a third section at the end of the bibliography includes **'Town histories and Profiles'**. Most of the resources listed in this section are available in hard copies at the Namibia Scientific Society Library in Windhoek, with the South West African later Namibian Scientific Society and the Museum Scientific Society Swakopmund having produced several historical publications on Namibian towns. We hope that this section, along with the rest of the bibliography, will expand and grow with time. And lastly, a final section in the bibliography includes useful links on **'Legislation'** concerning urban development in Namibia.

Below some key past and present trends in research on urban Namibia are highlighted. This is not meant to be a comprehensive review, but an additional guide for framing and engaging with the bibliography.

3. Framing the bibliography

EARLY URBAN RESEARCH

The urban question in Namibia is inseparable from the wider historical processes and Namibia's changing colonial and post-colonial political and cultural economy and context. During the early to mid-20th century, research on urban development and urbanisation in Namibia was dominated by apartheid state ethnologists and other government-funded agencies. Additionally, from the late 1960s up until the 2000s, a handful of international and internationally-based scholars played a major role in shaping the urban research agenda in Namibia. The lack of tertiary education institutions in pre-independence Namibia, combined with an oppressive apartheid state regime, meant that even the idea of research seemed foreign or had to be state-sanctioned. Post-independence, the changing political climate and processes of internationalisation brought a wave of international researchers, while the establishment of local research and tertiary institutions and organisations provided platforms for collaboration. These trends are briefly outlined and discussed in more detail below.

Of all the state agencies, it is worth mentioning the National Building and Investment Corporation of South West Africa (NBIC), which was established in 1978, and became operational in 1982 as Namibia's official low-income housing development agency. This agency produced a large archive on housing and urban development in Namibia. After

Independence in 1990, the NBIC was incorporated into the newly established National Housing Enterprise (NHE). The NBIC and NHE documents listed in this bibliography are available at the Habitat Resource and Development Centre Library in Katutura, Windhoek. Importantly, the sources listed in this bibliography is a work in progress and only serves as an indication of the NBIC/NHE publications available.

Furthermore, before independence, and apart from government-backed ethnologists, the urban research field was primarily dominated by international scholars. These included, Wade Pendleton, a social anthropologist from Berkeley, and David Simon, a South African born and UK based urban geographer, both of whom conducted their PhD research in Namibia, and in Windhoek specifically. David Simon initially planned to study Windhoek as a post-apartheid city during the early 1980s. However, the anticipated realisation of the Namibian independence was delayed. The subject of his thesis (1983a) then shifted towards understanding aspects of urban change during this contested transitional period – a theme which he subsequently continued to research during the 1980s.

With the release of the Odendaal Report in 1964, urban areas were still legally reserved and regulated for "whites" and the settler population. However, during the 1970s the apartheid regime was increasingly under pressure, both locally and internationally. The Portuguese coup in 1974, followed by the Turnhalle Constitutional Conference (1975-1978), ushered in a new era for urban development and governance in Namibia. The territory emerged as a testing ground for observing the effects of repealing racially discriminatory legislation for urban areas. Yet, these changes were not accompanied by larger transformations in the racist political economy and relations of production (Simon 1985b).

Simon's work critically examines these processes and drivers of change in urban Namibia – both from the situated perspective of the apartheid, colonial and 'Third world' city of Windhoek (Simon 1982, 1983c, 1984c, 1984b, 1984a) as well as in relation to Namibia's larger political geography of desegregation, decolonialisation and social transformation, including the rise of a neo-apartheid local government (Simon 1983b, 1985c, 1985b, 1985a, 1986). His work during the late 1980s likewise studies urban dynamics during the eventual shift to independence, including themes such as the politics of low-income housing and squatting, changing rural-urban migration, and transport (Simon 1988b, 1989d, 1989c, 1989a, 1989b).

During the workshop, Simon shared that navigating urban research during this time was challenging. Urban spaces were shaped by state and security control and racial segregation, and social and research encounters were fraught with fear and suspicion. In addition, establishing rapport in the historically "black" and "coloured" urban areas as a "white" South African researcher required the careful negotiation of his multiple and shifting identities. His association with the University of Oxford afforded him a useful outsider status and a tool to disassociate from the settler communities and especially the apartheid state and to deflect concerns that he was a spy. At the same time, his historical privilege as a "white" South African and Afrikaans, English and German linguistic capacities enabled him to gain crucial access to places and information and to navigate the suspicions of the state.

Like Simon, most of Pendleton's research was situated in Windhoek, including his PhD research (1970/1971). Coming from a different disciplinary background, his research focused on the social relations in the city and in Katutura specifically, including conjugal unions (1971), social categorisation and language use (1975), ethnicity and social structures (1978), and histories of forced relocations (Pendleton 1974, Dale and Pendleton 1976), and later shifted towards themes of urbanisation and development (1979). During the 1970s and 1980s there was also a strong political and academic interest in in the larger political economy of migrant labour, class formation, mining compounds, and rural-urban linkages (see for instance, Gordon 1977, Moorsom 1977). The Informationsstelle Südliches Afrika e.V (The Information Centre Southern Africa) in Bonn, Germany, in existence since 1971, was one of a handful of international institutions which released a number publications on urban Namibia (albeit in German), including an edited collection on Katutura (Melber 1988, Simon 1988a) and publications on the migrant labour and homeland system (Ripken and Wellmer 1976, Vesper 1983).

Urban housing was another key theme during this time, yet as noted earlier, predominantly researched by state and urban planning institutions. Anna Muller was the exception. A Namibian researcher and practitioner who has worked in urban Namibia since the mid-1980s, she qualified as an architect at the then University of Port Elizabeth in South Africa. Upon her return to Namibia, she worked for the government as an architect in the Department of Works. Her interest in the social aspects of architecture and the provision of housing for developing countries motivated her to further her studies. She was awarded a Rössing scholarship to complete a master's degree at the University of Newcastle Upon Tyne. Her studies examined the provision of housing in Katutura in Windhoek (Muller 1985) and the Five Rand camp in Okahandja (Muller 1988).

Working with the communities was a turning point for her. It cemented her conviction to talk to people about their housing needs and their experience of, including exclusion from, the formal housing process, and to further open such findings to a wider discussion. It also fostered her theoretical interest in how people perceive, value and co-construct social and physical space. At this point, and in Namibia, few researchers explored this theme. One exception was Glen Mills (1984), whose master's thesis and later work analysed the spatial and social dynamics of indigenous architecture in northern Namibia and who argued against conflating style with ethnicity. After her MPhil studies, and during the first years of her part time PhD studies, Muller was employed at the NBIC, later the NHE.

The onset of Independence in 1990 ushered in a new era for urban research in Namibia. The establishment of the Namibian Institute for Social and Economic Research (NISER) at the University of Namibia, which was later incorporated into the Multidisciplinary Research Centre's (MRC) Social Sciences Division (SDD), produced several working papers, reports, and publications during the 1990s, both by international and local researchers. Other organisations, such as the Namibia Economic and Policy Research Unit (NEPRU), a non-governmental organisation (NGO) established after 1990s and which closed in 2011, also delivered socio-spatial-related outputs and working papers covering a range of themes, including housing, urbanisation, migration, and urban land. Despite the changing institutional landscape, research on urban development and urbanisation in Namibia remained limited and primarily conducted by international researchers.

David Simon's research stretched until the early 2000s, after which he occasionally worked in Namibia, with his most recent work done in 2008. During this time, debates centered on how to end the previously apartheid-imposed restrictions and control and what modernising and desegregating Windhoek would look like and mean in practice. Simon's work continued to explore the larger geopolitics of urban change in Namibia (Simon 1991a, 1991b, Sidaway and Simon 1993, Simon 1993b), including from the perspective of Windhoek (Simon 1995a), state intervention in land and housing markets (1993c), the restructuring of the local state and processes of decentralisation (Simon 1996g, 1996c, 1999), the integration of Walvis Bay into the Namibian territory (Simon 1993a, 1996d, 1996a, 1998, Simon and Ekobo 2008) and urbanisation and industrialisation (Simon 1996f). His work also examined the role of smaller urban centres in national and urban development (Simon 1995b, 1996e).

Apart from his academic research, Simon was an expert advisor to the first Delimitation Commission, responsible for researching and establishing historical and administrative boundaries in Namibia. Later he received research grants to evaluate Namibia's regional councils and decentralisation process and to write short summary reports for policy makers on different urban development issues, including the land and housing rights of migrants moving into Windhoek (Simon 1995c, 1996b). Simon remembered how, at some point, several shacks and mud huts constructed at the outskirts of Katutura became a strong bone of contention. Whereas he saw this as ways of accommodating people, the consensus was that this was the rural "infesting" the town, as not modern enough for the dominant visions of urban growth and development. Simon reflected that for some leaders, their perceptions and values were shaped by their lived experiences in the refugee camps where 'informality' was something which was 'diseased' and a sign of repression. These past experiences shifted the support towards more formal and modernist ideologies of urban planning. At the same time, like in many post-colonial contexts, the new political and economic elites took on the roles of the former colonial elite and entrenched processes of discrimination towards the urban poor, enforcing state

regulation and formalisation, based not necessarily on evidence, but on inherited power relations and modes of governance.

Muller's work in turn, like that of Simon, focused on shifting these power relations. Her passion for working with the community led her to pursue a PhD, focusing on the role of community and grassroots mobilisation in securing and facilitating access to housing, and shared knowledge in the formal housing process and in socio-spatial development (Muller 1995). During this time and as noted above, the urban planning and design sciences were still characterised by the impetus to segregate, separate, formalise and modernise. Moreover, the prevalent social models were based on 'Western' ideas of the nuclear family. These paradigms and models conflicted with Namibia's social and urban realities. Muller's research thus begged the question: For whom are we planning and designing? Her research, like that of Simon's, was thus directly addressing and in conversation with the urban planners and policymakers, and with the state.

Muller's PhD was based on her experience of the establishment of the 'Saamstaan' housing cooperative in Windhoek, which later evolved into the Namibia Housing Action Group (NHAG). NHAG was established as a trust in 1999 to support the Shack Dwellers Federation of Namibia (SDFN). During the last decades SDFN has become a major grassroots movement in decentralising the housing process and institutionalising radically participatory planning and development approaches. The mid-1990s thus signaled a shift towards acknowledging that the community affected can and should contribute to the urban knowledge production process and as self-determining agents. Working primarily with NHAG, Muller over the years produced several publications on housing and urban land and together with other key researchers such as Diana Mitlin (Gold *et al.* 2001, Mitlin and Muller 2004, Muller and Mitlin 2007, Muller and Mbanga 2012, Delgado *et al.* 2020).

Like Simon and Muller, Pendleton's research also stretched into the 1990s and he remained active in Namibia until 2016. He was based at UNAM's NISER and MRC (SSD) centres and conducted surveys on the living conditions in Windhoek (1990) and Katutura (Pendleton 1991) and socio-economic assessments of the northern urban areas (Pendleton *et al.* 1992, Hamata *et al.* 1996). He also published follow-up research on the changing conditions of everyday life and social relations in Katutura, including a reflection on his fieldwork experiences here (Pendleton 1994, Hamata *et al.* 1996, Pendleton 1996, 1997, 2002). During this time the Namibian Migration Project was launched, with Pendleton working together with another key researcher, Bruce Frayne, on understanding rural-urban linkages and changing patterns of migration (Pendleton *et al.* 1998, Frayne and Pendleton 2002). This project shaped Pendleton's future research, which primarily addressed migration and in relation to population dynamics (Pendleton and Frayne 2000), the macro and micro variables of mobility (Frayne and Pendleton 2001), urban governance (Pendleton 2008), and food security (Pendleton *et al.* 2014, Pendleton and Nickanor 2016). In 2001 he also co-authored a paper with Frayne and Akiser Pomuti on the dynamics of urban development and community participation in Oshakati (Frayne *et al.* 2001).

His later work on migration was conducted in the context of the Southern Africa Migration Project (SAMP, https://samponline.org/), an international research network founded in 1996 to promote awareness of migration-development linkages in the region, the African Food Security Urban Network (AFSUN, https://www.afsun.org/), a research network founded in 2008, and the Hungry Cities Partnership (HCP, https://hungrycities.net/), an international network of city-based partner organisations which focus on the relationships between rapid urbanisation, informality, inclusive growth and urban food systems in the Global South and primarily funded by Canadian institutions. In the last-mentioned projects, Pendleton collaborated not only with Frayne, but also with contemporary Namibian scholars at UNAM, Nickanor Ndeyapo and Lawrence Kazembe, both of who research urban food systems and insecurity, and urbanisation (Indongo *et al.* 2013, Nickanor 2014, Kazembe *et al.* 2019, Nickanor *et al.* 2019).

As noted above, Bruce Frayne (urban planner and geographer) also worked with NISER and MRC at UNAM during the early 1990s soon after he completed his master's degree in South Africa. He published extensively on housing and the informal economy, urbanisation, development and planning, and with a focus specifically on Windhoek and Katutura,

and to some degree on the northern urban settlements (Frayne 1991, Fröhlich and Frayne 1991, Frayne 1992, Frayne *et al.* 1994, Frayne and University of Namibia. 1996, Frayne 1997, 1998, 2000). In 2001 he completed his PhD with Queens University in Canada, based on his research in Namibia. His PhD research shifted from an emphasis on urban systems of acquisition and production and agriculture to examining the linkages and food chains between rural and urban areas and their embeddedness in systems of migrancy. Moreover, he argued against understanding systems migrancy as a unilinear process between rural and urban areas. Later research further pursued this thematic area, specifically in relation to urban poverty and survival strategies and in affiliation with the International Development Research Centre (IDRC) in Canada, the Southern African Migration Project, and the Hungry Cities Partnership (Frayne 2001, 2004, 2005b, 2005a, 2007).

As noted above, during this time urban research branched out to Namibia's northern urban areas and secondary towns and had a strong focus on urban poverty and migration. Inge Tvedten, a Norwegian social anthropologist, and applied researcher was another key figure at the MRC's Social Sciences Division. Based at the Chr. Michelsen Institute (CMI) in Norway, he facilitated a research corporation between MRC, NEPRU and the CMI between 1998-2003. During the early 1990s he worked as an advisor on the Oshakati Human Settlement Improvement Project (Tvedten and Hangula 1993, Tvedten 1994, Tvedten and Pomuti 1994, Tostensen *et al.* 2001) – a project which involved local scholars such as Lazarus Hangula and Akiser Pomuti. His later work analysed urban policies and urbanisation (Tvedten and Mupotola 1995, Pomuti and Tvedten 1998) and like Frayne and Pendleton, examined the importance of social relations, networks, capital, and rural-urban relations and migration in navigating urban poverty and livelihoods (Tvedten and Nangula 1999, Tvedten 2004). He went on to complete his PhD with the University of Cape Town in these thematic areas and based on his field research in Oshakati's informal settlements (Tvedten 2008, 2011).

There were also some non-English works published on urban Namibia during this time, specifically in French and in German. Elisabeth Peyroux (social anthropologist and urban geographer) and Olivier Graefe (geographer), both completed their PhD research in Namibia during the late 1990s and authored several publications, including collaborating on some of them (Peyroux and Graefe 1995). Peyroux's PhD (Peyroux 2000) addressed housing policies and residential practices in Windhoek and in a context of post-apartheid socio-spatial transformations. Her publications included a geographic focus both on Windhoek and Oshakati and themes such as urban growth and housing, socio-spatial change and regulation, decentralisation, and securitisation (Peyroux 1999, 2000, Graefe and Peyroux 2001, Peyroux 2001, 2004, 2006, Bénit-Gbaffou *et al.* 2009, Morange *et al.* 2012).

Olivier Graefe's PhD (Graefe 1999), which was also completed in France, explored the socio-spatial production of urban territories in relation to local governments, power structures and land management in the urban centres of Oshakati, Ongwediva, Ondangwa and Rundu. His earlier publications similarly focused on the northern urban centres, especially Rundu (Graefe *et al.* 1994), informal settlements at Windhoek's periphery (1995), and later on decentralisation, state regulation, and land management in post-apartheid urban Namibia (Graefe *et al.* 1994, Graefe 1997, Diener and Graefe 1999, Dubresson and Graefe 1999, 2001, Graefe 2003).

In 2004, Fatima Müller-Friedman (geographer and architect) followed with a PhD on urban Namibia from the University of Cambridge, but with a focus on Opuwo, in north-western Namibia. Her reason for pursuing this research was rooted in her prior research and work experience. Before becoming a geographer, she worked as a professional architect in Germany, Namibia (1995-1996 Kerry McNamara Architects, Windhoek) and in the United States. She came to Namibia with the idea to practice socially impactful architecture and with an interest in the desegregation and decolonisation of urban space. During this time, her interest grew in finding Namibian ways of planning and visioning urban growth. This led her to complete her master's thesis on the urban morphology of Windhoek (2000).

For her PhD research she shifted to a more marginal urban space in the hope to engage with the ways in which the Opuwo residents perceive, value and co-construct the modern built environment. She found that the dominant urban growth desired was once again modernist, concluding that such claims need to be taken seriously as the basis of imagined urban futures and should be situated in a larger context of marginality, exclusion and post-apartheid possibilities (Müller-Friedman 2004, 2005, 2007). Later research similarly dealt with the politics of post-apartheid

socio-spatial transformations and the relational and dialectical dynamic between the real and imagined, and the practiced and planned urban space (Müller-Friedman 2006, Müller-Friedman 2008).

EMERGING TRENDS

Since the mid-2000s, several developments have strengthened the urban research and development agenda in and for Namibia. These developments are driven by a new generation of Namibian-based and/or Namibian urban scholars and practitioners, such as (but not limited to) Stephanie Roland, Phillip Lühl, Guillermo Delgado, Ellison Tjirera and Nashilongweshipwe Mushaandja; by grass-roots urban development and housing organisations such as the NHAG/SDFN and Development Workshop Namibia; by social movements such that of the Decolonising Space Group (DSG); and by a changing institutional landscape.

The Integrated Land Management Institute (ILMI) at NUST was established in 2006. Originally conceived as an extension of the Department of Land Management, it soon fostered a productive space for several applied research projects, including on urban Namibia. Since 2015, activities at ILMI are guided by the Land, Livelihoods and Housing programme, with a strong focus on coordinating and promoting a transdisciplinary research, outreach, and education programme and with a dedicated urban agenda. ILMI has also partnered with UNAM and with various international and regional universities and research projects. These include for instance the recently launched project PURE (Peri-urban Resilient Ecosystems Project), which studies Namibia's urban social ecologies, with a focus on dryland nature-based solutions for informal settlement upgrading – a largely under researched theme. Namibia's first undergraduate architecture and urban planning programme and Department of Architecture and Spatial Planning were also established at NUST in 2010 (see Lühl 2016).

These developments in turn have been and continue to be shaped by the shifting scope of the urban question in Namibia. As Anna Muller points out, where there were 5 shacks in Windhoek in the 1980s, now there are 60 000. For the people living in informal structures and settlements, state bureaucracy and formalised processes in housing and land-rights and in economies are a major challenge and barrier, and further serve to marginalise the urban poor and deepen existing inequalities, including inequalities in terms of who dictates the nature of urban growth and development. The question of participatory informal settlement upgrading, growth and planning (ILMI Staff 2017, Weber and Mendelsohn 2017, Delgado and Geingos 2019, Delgado *et al.* 2020), informality, urban land (Becker 2016, Lühl and Delgado 2018, Larsen and Augustus 2020, Metsola 2021), and socio-spatial and urban knowledge co-production between residents, planners, government, academics, and other practitioners have thus emerged as crucial thematic areas for urban research during the last decade (Muller and Mbanga 2012, Harris 2016, Chitekwe-Biti 2018, Delgado *et al.* 2020).

These trends in urban research must also be situated in relation to the growing praxis of socio-spatial decolonialisation and what Guillermo Delgado, borrowing from Mushaandja, has referred to as the primarily youth-driven struggle fuelled by dissatisfaction with a condition of "delayed decoloniality". This movement and praxis has grown from realisations that the apartheid planning ideologies are resilient and still informing contemporary visions, including the dominant discourse of formal vs informal (Lühl 2020), and that lived urban spaces are deeply imbued with the colonial and apartheid pasts and are differentially known, felt, and embodied across situated social and economic intersections (Tjirera 2019, Roland 2021). Thus, grassroots social movements and various activists, artists, and scholars have been grappling with decolonising Namibia's urban spaces and trajectories of development – both from a socio-spatial, political, epistemological, praxis-orientated, and performance-based perspectives (see for instance, Lühl 2016, Mushaandja 2020, Delgado 2021, Figueira 2021, Mushaandja 2021a, 2021b). This is being done in ways that deconstruct Eurocentric disciplinary silos and boundaries and asymmetrical power relations within the urban planning and development arena, also drawing on feminist, decolonial and queer scholarship.

Moreover, these debates are motivated by a shared commitment to social and spatial justice and scholarship rooted in praxis. For example, Delgado detailed how when he first began conducting research in Namibia after his arrival in 2010, he encountered a sense of exhaustion regarding "more research" about living conditions. The urgency and

immediacy of peoples' lived realities thus call for radically different research methodologies, including the fostering of alliances. Apart from various applied research projects primarily by Namibian-based scholars, practitioners, and students, ILMI has co-facilitated the establishment of key public platforms towards democratising urban knowledge production and development. The 'National Alliance for Informal Settlement Upgrading' was established as "a partnership to scale up security of tenure and housing opportunities through co-production between organised communities, local and regional authorities, central government, and universities; with the aim of taking efforts nation-wide" (http://ilmi.nust.na/national-alliance). While the 'Urban Forum' is an initiative started in 2015 and which eventually grew into a permanent platform for fostering dialogue and multistakeholder engagement on issues of urbanisation and for creating an archive of the process (http://urbanforum.nust.na). The 2018 Namibian Land Conference also signalled a major turning point, with urban and urban development incorporated into the national agenda and conversation. 2021 furthermore saw the inauguration of the Namibian Journal of Social Justice (https://namsocialjustice.org/), with the first edition critically examining the Namibian Housing Crisis.

Despite these positive trends and developments, research on urban Namibia is still majorly underfunded and nascent – with local academic research limited to master's thesis research projects and a small number of local and international scholars. During the workshop research gaps were pointed out. Windhoek has emerged as the main geographic focus in Namibian urban studies, followed by that of the northern urban centres, such as Oshakati/Ondangwa and Rundu, and the harbour town of Walvis Bay. A wider and more diverse geographic, geopolitical, and political economic perspective is lacking. Theorising the urban question in relation to the planetary processes of urbanisation which are re-figuring Namibia is pertinent, especially given the ongoing parcelling up of the lands and the ocean by the state for mining exploration licences and transnational extractive industries, and their colonial and imperial historical trajectories. Other noted gaps include research on urban lifeworlds and citizenry, public and popular culture, sociality, social belonging and identities, mobility, the night and street life, and the politics of imagination, performance, and possibility (the multiple elsewheres from which we draw in fashioning urbanity). In addition, and as mentioned in the introduction, there is a need to better understand the structural and socio-economic inequalities and exclusions generated and reified by urban growth, including access to and ownership of peri-urban and urban land, housing, services, and livelihoods. Urban and peri-urban ecologies and agriculture is also still vastly under researched.

Moreover, research on Namibia's colonial and apartheid urban histories, especially beyond Windhoek and Katutura, remains limited. Werner Hillebrecht, a Namibian archivist who also participated in the workshop, observed that there are several gaps and opportunities, including looking at the connections between urban and rural apartheid. For example, a decade-long exchange of correspondence between the SWA Administration and Windhoek Municipality on the Aukeigas Reserve are held at the National Archives. The Municipality wanted to remove the reserve because of the close connections between the residents of the Old Location and Aukeigas, which they deemed detrimental. In the mid-1950s, the residents of Aukeigas were indeed resettled into areas that later became "Damaraland" homeland in west Namibia. Unexamined old records of the City of Windhoek planning division, and the commission hearings which followed the Old Location massacre in December 1959, also point to several untold urban social, political, and public histories (Hillebrecht 2021, personal communication).

Nevertheless, as Nashilongweshipwe Mushaandja reminds us, archives are also lived and embodied, and embedded in places, performance, and practice. Hence, urban pasts and knowledge are also to be found and are constantly created in the everyday, in the arts, in solidarity and protest movements, and lived and shared experiences.

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