

Wits-TUB Urban Lab

Interdisciplinary Bilateral Postgraduate Studies Programme for Sub-Saharan Africa



ed to enable truly transformative actions, motivating changes in the way we use, build and govern our urban environments.

The Interdisciplinary Bilateral Postgraduate Studies Programme for Sub-Saharan Africa (Wits-TUB Urban Lab) supported by the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) and the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) was launched in September 2016 for an initial four and half year period. It seeks to improve graduate education in urban fields across Sub-Saharan Africa. Both lead partners, the Habitat Unit at the School of Architecture of the Technische Universität Berlin, and the School of Architecture and Planning at University of the Witwatersrand offer a new urban-oriented graduate and postgraduate training and capacity building programme that effectively addresses the challenges and needs outlined above.

The programme enables scholars from across the African subcontinent to

partake in masters and PhD studies at Wits, and in the course of its duration engages in curriculum development and the introduction of new teaching modules. Furthermore, project activities include multilateral exchanges through workshops and conferences that are centred on a novel approach of co-production in the implementation of urban SDGs.

Overall, the programme is designed to facilitate the international exchange of ideas between research institutions and seeks to strengthen the network of African urban academics and institutions such as the Association of African Planning Schools (AAPS) and the African Urban Research Initiative (AURI).

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Paris Agreement have highlighted the central roles played by cities and local urban stakeholders in achieving sustainable development. The Habitat III process and the New Urban Agenda (NUA), agreed in Quito in October 2016, are a unique opportunity to strengthen the urban narrative globally and provide an enabling framework for cities and local urban stakeholders to achieve SDG goals.

By recognising that cities and their inhabitants safeguard global common goods, such as climate, economic prosperity, social integration, democratisation and political stability, a profound change in policy responses is need-

Rethinking post-graduate planning education in Sub-Saharan Africa to meet contemporary urban sustainability challenges: Towards a 'Co-Productive' Approach

The WITS-TUB Urban Lab takes an integrated approach to sustainable urban planning and management that catalyses spatial, environmental, social and economic equity.

Conventional approaches to planning education in Sub-Saharan Africa primarily focus on technocratic solutions. Meanwhile actors

such as residents, community-based organisations, NGOs and the private sector are contributing to everyday urban governance and planning across the continent. In doing so, they have developed a multiplicity of everyday practices to keep things afloat. These actors play an integral part in 'co-producing' urban solutions that are not only sustainable, but socially and culturally appropriate and can potentially facilitate or even catalyse a more equitable distribution of urban resources.

Based on decades of experience working on urban planning and governance challenges across the African continent, Europe and the

Middle East we are developing post-graduate education that is based on the idea that urban planning and governance is most successful if based on 'co-production'. In this context, we understand 'co-production' as horizontal collaboration in urban planning and management. Here, a variety of state and non-state actors each contribute knowledge and expertise that facilitates and strengthens the urban planning and governance process.

As a result of four collaborative workshops the Wits-TUB Urban Lab team identified key themes to support the reform of existing planning curricula in Sub-Saharan Africa towards

a 'co-productive' approach to urban planning and management. Furthermore, the programme seeks to strengthen collaboration across urban disciplines and sectors and fosters urban planning networks across the African continent.

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Project PIs

University of Witwatersrand:

Project coordinators

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Master of Urban Studies in the Field of Urban Management – MUS (UM)

The newly established MUS (UM) is a one-year full time or two-year part-time degree. It responds to challenges associated with rapid urbanisation process by providing practice-oriented knowledge and innovative skills to graduates who have a drive for urban transformation. This programme introduces the field of urban management through the four cross-cutting dimensions identified as crucial elements of the curriculum reform

- Politics and policy of the urban
- Understanding complex urban systems
- Managing change processes
- Co-producing knowledge between theory and practice

Addressing, analysing and responding to these four dimensions is significant for engagement with the urban. MUS (UM) seeks to educate and train planning and built environment practitioners, researchers, scholars and policy makers who can integrate the knowledge of and skills in urban policy, development and management and the planning, urban and social sciences in general, in order to foster transformative urban strategies that enable cities to function more efficiently and effectively.

<https://www.wits.ac.za/urban-management/>

Global Outreach



- The programme's main project partners
- International Conferences
- Country of origin of visiting lecturers, Master and PhD scholars

Project Milestones



The programme's PhD students



Zonke Bella Mkhomazi is an Urban and Regional Planning PhD candidate from the Wits-TUB Urban Lab Programme, where she is developing a theoretical lens to approach the integration of the paratransit system into the formal Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) road network within cities of the South. She is an Urban Planner with a background in Landscape Architecture and has a Master degree in Development Planning from the University of Witwatersrand and has obtained Honours in Applied Science in Architecture from the University of Pretoria.



Dennis K. Sumbo is a Land Economist who acquired his Bachelor (Land Economy) and Master (Urban Management) degrees from Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology (KNUST), Kumasi-Ghana. His research which is titled 'Peri-urbanisation and Changing Usufruct Rights in Customary Land in Ghana' has case studies in Wa and Kumasi. From 2014 to 2017 Mr. Sumbo worked at the Centre for Settlements Studies of KNUST as Research/ Graduate Assistant. Mr. Sumbo has interests in Land Tenure, Urban Land Management and Urban Housing.



Tinashe Dube holds a Master degree in Architecture from the University of Pretoria. Since completing her degree, she has worked on architectural community intervention strategies and completed academic studies on informality, sub-letting conditions in apartments in Pretoria and Johannesburg and residential conditions for Zimbabwean migrant families. Her PhD project is titled: 'Relating residential histories to the present-day apartment choices and associated lifestyles of middle-class urban inhabitants in multi-storey buildings in Braamfontein, South Africa'.



Vipua Rukambe is a Namibian architect, holding a Master degree (MArch) from the University of Pretoria, South Africa. Her current studies focus on substantiating the temporal dimensions of the emerging field of sustainable city transitioning, based on a neurophenomenological perspective, pursued through a qualitative study approach. The research will use as an empirical case study the Marlboro Gautrain station precinct, in Johannesburg, South Africa. The title of the research is: 'Memories of futures-past and visions of future-futures: a backcasting approach to evolving tools and methods for sustainable city transitioning for African cities'.



George Kwadwo Anane holds a Master of Science Degree (Development Policy and Planning) from the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology, Kumasi. He is currently working on a research project titled 'The relationship between land administration systems and spatial change in the urban peripheries of Ghana: The case of Kumasi and Sunyani'. His doctoral research compares the (neo)customary and statutory land administration systems in Ghana to understand how they influence spatial change in two peri-urban areas; Abukwa in Kumasi and Adomako in Sunyani.



Mamonye Mokoena holds a Bachelor degree in Urban and Regional Planning from the National University of Lesotho, a Master degree in Urban and Regional Planning and a Master Degree in Environmental Management obtained from the Free State University. She has professional experience as a town planner in policy development, land use management and economic development obtained at local, provincial and national levels of government in South Africa. Her doctoral research project is titled 'The socio-economic impacts of the declining mining industry on local communities - The case of Merafong City Local Municipality in South Africa'.