

## Women's Perceptions and Place Dynamics (WoPedyP)

**From Knowledge Coproduction  
to Transformative Pathways for  
Sustaining Peri-urban Livelihoods  
in Mankweng**

(Nov 2021 – Oct 2025 / Jan 2026)

**Research Question:**  
How can women's perceptions of place dynamics help in fostering women's agency towards an active place shaping of peri-urban settlements to accelerate transitioning to more sustainable livelihoods in a post-COVID-19 society?




Project proposal call: 2020 South African / German Collaborative Research Programme (SAG CORE) on 'The Interface between Global Change and Social Sciences - post COVID-19'



→ focusing on 'Well-being, quality of life, identity, and social and cultural values in relation to transformations to sustainability - post-COVID-19'

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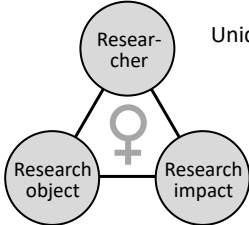



- increasing population densities  
 - all depending on limited resources  
 - competitive / conflicting situations  
 → communities: constantly in flux  
 → smallholder farming: a challenge  
 in addition: impacts of climate change,  
 recently also COVID-19











**Background / Setting:**  
 Challenge for South Africa: people moving into **peri-urban areas** at a fast pace, hoping to get access to public services  
 → faster than settlements can be planned and provided with infrastructure  
 Mankweng (Limpopo): an example of dramatic urbanization in the small towns of former homelands

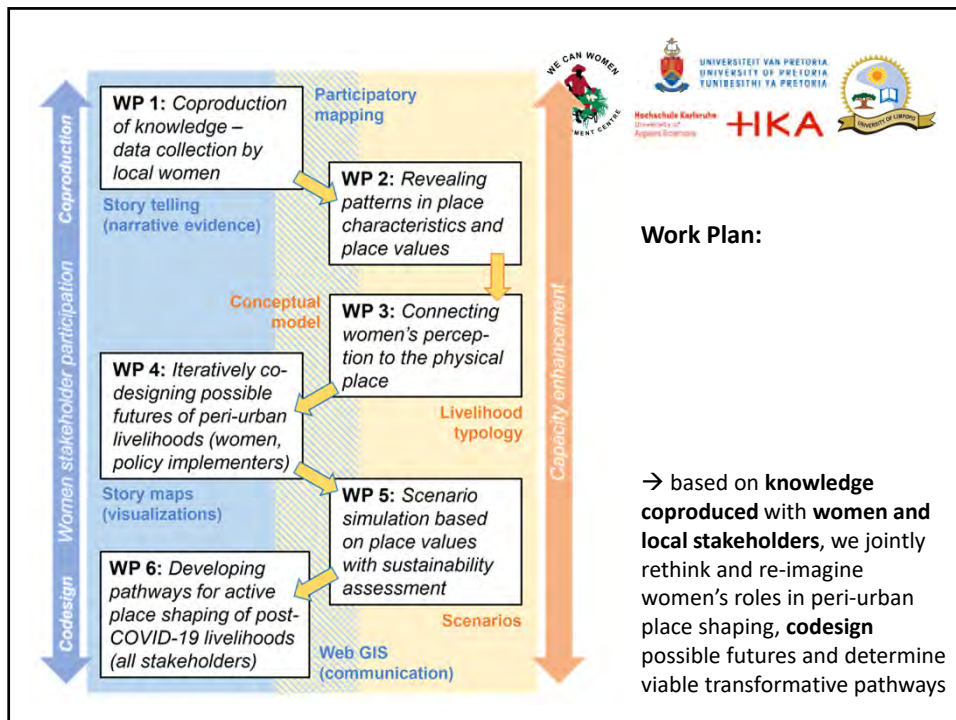
Unique study:  
**linking women and place**  
 (geography)



**Research Team:**



	<b>Serena Coetzee</b> (UP, South African PI): geoinformatics, addressing, spatial data infrastructures, open principles	→		<b>Azile</b> (UP PhD1, Geoinformatics): <i>Accessibility and addressing (outer dimension)</i>
	<b>Gertrud Schaab</b> (HKA, German PI): LUCC analysis, upscaling & scenario simulation; communication of results	→		<b>Deepthi</b> (HKA PhD, Geomatics): <i>LUC and livelihood typology/ scenarios (outer dimension)</i>
	<b>Nerhene C. Davis</b> (UP): sustainable livelihoods with a focus on gender questions	→		<b>Yajna</b> (UP PhD2, Geography): <i>Women's perceptions, i.e. sense of place &amp; values (inner dimen.)</i>
	<b>Marubini Ramudzuli</b> (UL): sust. livelihoods, resource perception & management, Mankweng study area	→		<b>Melon</b> (UL Master, Geography): <i>Understanding livelihood dynamics (inner dimension)</i>
	<b>Izelque Botha</b> (UL): environmental / climate change and perception	→	<b>PhD / Master students</b> ← Training	
	<b>Esther Mmasetepa Masekoameng</b> (We Can Women Development Centre, Ga-Mothapo): working with and involving women in Mankweng	→	interdisciplinary focus is on geo(infor)matcs and human geography / social science	

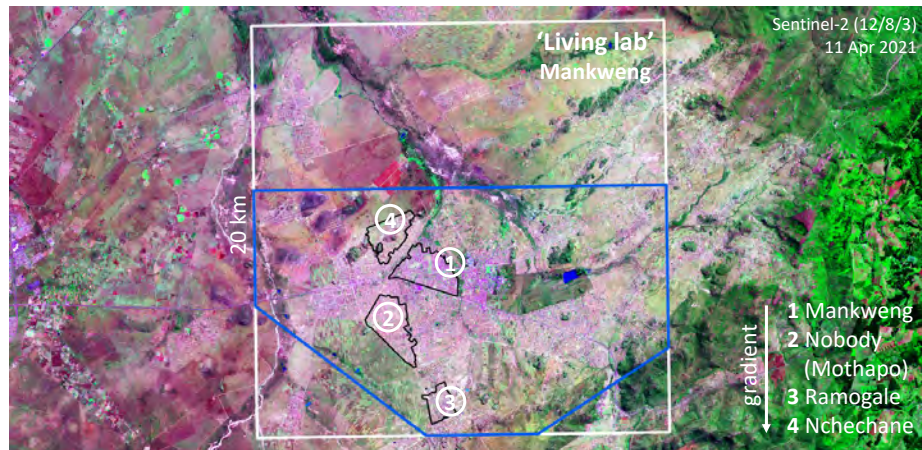


**Main achievements of the project**

→ the next 8 slides, also showcasing the embeddedness in the local ecosystem, were omitted due to the still ongoing work. You are welcome to check our web page on: <https://www.imm.hs-karlsruhe.de/WoPedyP/>.

### Scaling-up:

- part of project aims
  - other areas/countries in Africa: inter-disciplinary consortium, more 'living labs'
- contributing to higher levels of urban resilience (SDG 11)  
and to empowering women and girls (SDG 5)



### What works really well?

- Running questionnaire with UL Honours students' support
  - Ground truthing (collecting information via on-chance encounters)
- not yet half-time: depending on our postgrad students' progress

### What remains a challenge?

- Women's participation (availability)
- Fast / vast development on ground (PTO)
- Census 2021 data availability (published when?)
- Collaboration with the NGO



**Wishes:**

- Preparation of a single research proposal
- NGO or governmental office for implementation & sustainability (i.e. dep. on policy area, here: LU planning)
- Full-time bursaries for ZA PhD students (special/new funding scheme)
- Larger project consortium for internal competition/drive and greater impact (incl. a separate coordination subproject)
- Opportunities for >3 years of funding (phases, competitive)
- For sustainability: capacity development of next scientific generation (peer-support)

**Magic recipe?**

A detailed, realistic project plan (at time of proposal writing?)

+ appropriate funds (incl. for personnel)

+ good partnership with locals (takes time)

+ knowing your project partners well (previous cooperation)

