NEW AFRICAN URBAN UNIVERSITY

Worskhop Syntheses

Building partnerships to realise the promise and potential of sustainable urban transformations

NEW AFRICAN URBAN UNIVERSITY

About this
PROJECT

The New African Urban University partnership is developing a research agenda to strengthen the role of African universities to advance just and sustainable urban transitions in African cities.

It is based on the assumption that universities must play a role in addressing the 2030 United Nations Sustainable Development Agenda, in particular, the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 11 to make cities inclusive, safe, sustainable and resilient. This partnership engages with the promise and potential of African universities to support the steering of just and sustainable urban transitions. By fostering a more global and inclusive understanding of systems changes required by African universities, this partnership initiative will develop a distinctive approach to theory and practice.

This set of summary briefs describe the outcomes of three workshops that have taken place in the first quarter of 2022.

URBAN RESEARCH
Issues, Processes and Dynamics

✓ The objective of this workshop was to map the contributions of partner universities towards addressing sustainable urban development in African cities.

✓ The workshop engaged the question: How are African universities leveraging their role(s) in sustainable urban change?

URBAN KNOWLEDGE
Methods and Approaches

✓ The objective of this workshop was to engage with methods and approaches of knowledge coproduction currently used by partner universities to identify factors determining impact.

✓ The workshop engaged the question: What role does knowledge coproduction play in urban transformation in varying African contexts?

URBAN COMPETENCIES
Curriculum Development and Pedagogy

✓ The objective of this workshop was to engage with skills and competency development focused on transdisciplinarity and sustainable urban transitions.

✓ The workshop engaged the question: What and how do we currently teach about African cities, and how does this relate to the sustainable cities and transdisciplinary agendas?

URBAN
RESEARCH

*Workskhop
Synthesis*

Workshop SUMMARY

This gathering reflected on an archive of the heterogeneous efforts of universities to act in defiance of the normative trajectories of urbanization shaped through coloniality in order to concretely imagine what they might become as fully imbricated in the urbanization processes operative in their respective regions.

01 RESEARCH WORKING GROUP

A working group was convened based on responses to a survey of the network. The Urban Research working group was led by AbdouMaliq Simone and Shuaib Lwasa.

02 BROADER CONSULTATION

These were then shared and discussed amongst other working group leads in November 2021 as the three working groups cannot be viewed in silos, due to the interconnections and interdependencies between them.

03 WORKSHOPPED POSITION PAPER

The reworked position paper was then workshopped with the working group (and other members of the NAUU network) in March.

04 SYNTHESIS SUMMARY

These syntheses are a distillation of responses shared at the three workshops. Participants' names have been removed.

ATTENDEES

MAKERERE UNIVERSITY
Shuaib Lwasa
Paul Mukwaya

UNIVERSITY OF SHEFFIELD
AbdouMaliq Simone
Paula Meth
Beth Perry

UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA
Linda Robson

UNIVERSITY OF GHANA
Isaac Arthur
Rabiu Asante
Austin Ablo

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE TOWN
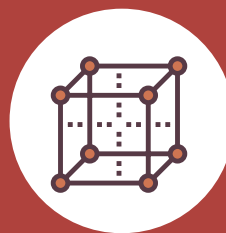Zarina Patel
heeten bhagat
Andrew Tucker

Framing for DISCUSSION

The working group on Urban Research used as its starting point the gap identified in the Project Primer, as follows:

GAP 1

Understanding the effectiveness and impact of universities in shaping urban change in African cities

The network prioritised three areas for further investigation:

Conceptual and structural issues around the positioning of African Universities in knowledge creation spaces

Global Embeddedness of African Universities

From basic to trans-disciplinary urban science.

While academics have had a long-standing role in informing and shaping urban change in African cities, little is documented about how African universities are leveraging their role(s) in sustainable urban change. Strategic planning interventions in post-colonial and post-apartheid cities have been largely driven by knowledge and expertise from urbanists and planners based at universities, who respond as consultants to calls for capacity strengthening across sub-national and national governments.

Similarly, academics have supported non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and community outreach structures in devising alternative solutions to municipal service delivery. However, little is known about the spread of interventions being addressed through urban research, and what gaps might exist (both sectorally and geographically i.e. what and where). Networks of African urban researchers have provided evidence that there are a range of strategies and interventions that are being introduced, however this is being done unevenly at different universities and with varying levels of effectiveness.

AN IMPORTANT REMINDER GUIDING THESE SESSIONS

"

We don't necessarily have to solve these questions – what is concerning is that these questions are resonant and are ones that need to be explored and understood better, and this is fine. It is useful that they are stimulating our thinking – so indicative that they belong in this bundle. How we frame them and incorporate them are the questions rather than trying to resolve them.

ZARINA PATEL

Objectives of the
WORKSHOP

✓ Identify the questions and rationales that would inform future research on the role of African Universities in shaping urban change in African cities.

✓ Reflect on the questions that were raised previously

- were these the right questions?
- what was missing?
- what elements are most important?

> "There are multiple tracks that we need to consider in order to have something useful to say about the relationship of universities as research institutions.
>
> — REFLECTIONS
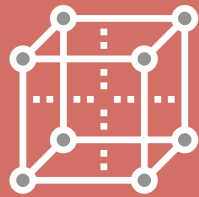
Session

01

Conceptual and structural issues around positioning of African Universities in knowledge creation spaces

A

How have African university institutions evolved?

B

What knowledge threads have aligned African universities with European institutions and what disobediences have emerged in relation to carrying this load?

C

What does the mapping of Pan-African ethos reveal about repositioning African Institutions?

D

With respect to African ethos and knowledge threads, how does positionality shape respect, reliability, confidence, or utility?

E

What lessons do we draw from recent COVID-19 OMICRON variant and the knowledge politics that has transpired?

F

What structural issues inhibit African Universities' transition into urbanizing institutions that can respond to realities of the economies?

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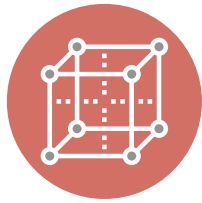
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With respect to African ethos and knowledge threads, how does positionality shape respect, reliability, confidence, or utility?

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What lessons do we draw from recent COVID-19 OMICRON variant and the knowledge politics that has transpired?

F
What structural issues inhibit African Universities' transition into urbanizing institutions that can respond to realities of the economies?

How have African university institutions evolved?

Discussion POINTS

- How have African university institutions evolved - from what and to what - do we need to define a starting point, and a descriptor of the current?

- What would the African university look like if it were able to respond to local urban realities - operationally, institutionally, relationally?

- What processes are they influencing?

- What are the kinds of urban development agendas are we/have we seen in Africa? And how have they been shaped by the macro-economic models in relation to the privatisation of university education?

- As universities are becoming more numerous, privatized—indeed responding to the enormous demand for tertiary education – do we need a more coherent educational policy at a national level?

A. How have African university institutions evolved?

RESPONSES

- Build a chain of knowledge across different disciplines – to broaden the scope of knowledge, and harness the capabilities of various institutions to address some of the key issues facing urban spaces – both in similar and unfamiliar ways.

- Make a case for raising local funding to investigate local issues to lessen reliance of funds from global north.

SYNTHESIS

Exploring the positioning of African Universities and their role in urban change begins with defining a starting point and a descriptor of the current distinctiveness of African cities.

A deeper engagement with increasingly complex urban development agendas is required across various African contexts.
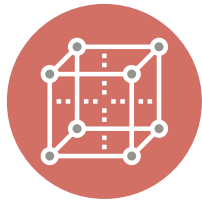
Engage with how and why African universities are influencing urban processes, and in partnerships with who.

"

The 'Africanacity' of knowledge production – spreading the ownership of knowledge.

— REFLECTIONS

Discussion POINTS

✓ Given the various pressures/obstacles facing universities across the continent, some have shifted practices/systems to suit their environment – economically, socially and politically. Is this shift from the colonial/imposed structure one that indicates a necessary and alternate institutional form that needs consideration?

✓ What are the ethics involved in recognising this shift and how can/ could this impact on the ways in which the NAUU proposes/imagines its own structural/ethical/relevant form?

✓ In relation to the idea of disobedience and 'non-academic practices' in many African universities - is the issue that non-African universities can't see / understand / respect these practices?

C. What knowledge threads have aligned African universities with European institutions and what disobediences have emerged in relation to carrying this load?

RESPONSES

Disobedience is also about innovation and distinctiveness. It's about push back and creating room and courage for hustling and going against the grain, a refusal to adhere to the cookie cutter template being imposed externally

SYNTHESIS

Identify the influence of northern universities on the research landscape at African Universities.

Map the context and processes by which alternate agendas are emerging
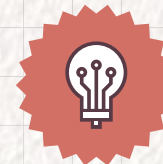
What is the role of 'non-academic' practices and functions in African Universities?

Do these practices and functions indicate new/unique research methods specific to/necessary for building knowledge of African cities?

" *The multiple tracks and the intersections between the issues and how we untangle that and how we address that in the research agenda is challenge but not one that I think is too difficult or beyond our capabilities.*

— REFLECTIONS

A

How have African university institutions evolved?

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What knowledge threads have aligned African universities with European institutions and what disobediences have emerged in relation to carrying this load?

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What does the mapping of Pan-African ethos reveal about repositioning African Institutions?

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With respect to African ethos and knowledge threads, how does positionality shape respect, reliability, confidence, or utility?

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What lessons do we draw from recent COVID-19 OMICRON variant and the knowledge politics that has transpired?

F
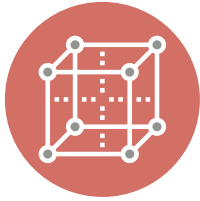
What structural issues inhibit African Universities' transition into urbanizing institutions that can respond to realities of the economies?

Discussion POINTS

✓ If secondary and tertiary activities require some sort of order, then the question, given the realities in urban Africa is whose order is it? For whom is this order being implemented? What roles do they play? These are conceptual questions around space and order of space in cities. And therefore, as African universities, do we need to rethink that?

✓ How are African cities currently being planned? And who is planning these cities? And what powers do they have?

C. What does the mapping of Pan-African ethos reveal about repositioning African Institutions?

RESPONSES

- Mapping of Pan-African ethos – this suggest something singular – perhaps we could reframe to register diversity.

- Build a more focused understanding how change-agents within universities [eg. Makerere University and African Centre for Cities (ACC)] are operating within their university system could be a useful contribution to this theme

- Engage the broader community from outside of the university

SYNTHESIS

Mapping the distinctiveness of African cities (Pan-African ethos) – whilst demonstrating convergences and divergences with northern assumptions about African cities.
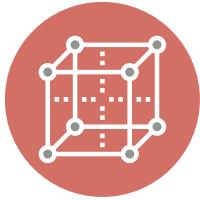
Identify and map current urban actors shaping African cities, including roles and influences.

"
We need to better understand different roles that different African universities play in African cities and the multiple dimensions of how they function within their cities and in relation to these big important urban questions.
— REFLECTIONS

A — How have African university institutions evolved?

B — What knowledge threads have aligned African universities with European institutions and what disobediences have emerged in relation to carrying this load?

C — What does the mapping of Pan-African ethos reveal about repositioning African Institutions?

D — With respect to African ethos and knowledge threads, how does positionality shape respect, reliability, confidence, or utility?

E — What lessons do we draw from recent COVID-19 OMICRON variant and the knowledge politics that has transpired?

F — What structural issues inhibit African Universities' transition into urbanizing institutions that can respond to realities of the economies?

Discussion POINTS

✔ Who sets the agenda on urban research and how can universities embrace their roles as urban institutions?

"

The issue of how different African universities enunciate themselves in the world, enunciate their research capacity, what they are able to do, and the variety of tactical processes to which this is done. One model is to take money from anywhere and give into the structure of the relationship just to get visibility. The other model is a strategic way of defining the terms of alliances and partnerships – thinking very carefully and reflexively about what that enunciation means to attain some kinds of ability and opportunities.

— REFLECTIONS

D. With respect to African ethos and knowledge threads, how does positionality shape respect, reliability, confidence, or utility?

RESPONSES

■ We could be clearer about what we mean by 'ethos and knowledge threads'

■ The question of ethos and knowledge threads forms part of the conceptual underpinnings that influence / shape the positioning of universities
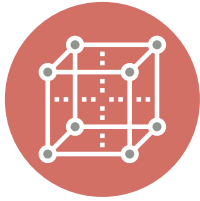
SYNTHESIS

What is the relationship between agents that set the urban agenda and African universities?

How much influence do African universities have in these processes?

A	B	C	D	E	F
How have African university institutions evolved?	What knowledge threads have aligned African universities with European institutions and what disobediences have emerged in relation to carrying this load?	What does the mapping of Pan-African ethos reveal about repositioning African Institutions?	With respect to African ethos and knowledge threads, how does positionality shape respect, reliability, confidence, or utility?	What lessons do we draw from recent COVID-19 OMICRON variant and the knowledge politics that has transpired?	What structural issues inhibit African Universities' transition into urbanizing institutions that can respond to realities of the economies?

Discussion POINTS

✓ Did the COVID pandemic present an opportunity for disobedience?

"

There is a need for us to appreciate the various challenging spaces we find ourselves in and for us to be able to chart a path that is common to all – we need to harness our strength across – universities across Africa have had different development trajectories and produced different dimension to all of us. These series of questions are key for us to draw out our strengths and build on our weaknesses so we can produce knowledge that is relevant to our context and also useful for towards the challenges in our various urban spaces.

— REFLECTIONS

E. What lessons do we draw from recent COVID-19 OMICRON variant and the knowledge politics that has transpired?
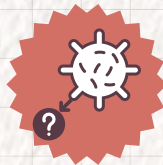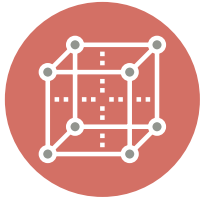
RESPONSES

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- The question of ethos and knowledge threads forms part of the conceptual underpinnings that influence / shape the positioning of universities

SYNTHESIS

What is the role of crisis in shaping alternate responses?

11

A — How have African university institutions evolved?

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F — What structural issues inhibit African Universities' transition into urbanizing institutions that can respond to realities of the economies?

Discussion POINTS

?

- ✓ What are the existing structural issues and which of these inhibit the transition of African Universities?

- ✓ What possibilities are there to offer some form of training, abilities to think, develop skills that can then can seamlessly link students to the existential economic structure?

- ✓ Are we seeing divergences in that kind of systematised process?

- ✓ What allows some universities to push back and create room, whilst not others? What are the structural points of leverage?

F. What structural issues inhibit African Universities' transition into urbanizing institutions that can respond to realities of the economies?

SYNTHESIS

How compatible are university structures with accommodating and influencing urban change?

Where are the opportunities for leveraging change?

What are the structural obstacles?

> " Regarding positionality and partnerships – there is need for a deep reflection individually and collectively about that – we need be mindful about hierarchies. In practice it is different, because there are systemic institutional arrangements in these partnerships that are very much informed by the colonial legacy that shape the nature of partnerships. It is a very complicated space which needs to be navigated carefully to ensure that the urban research agenda continues in a very respectful way assuming that it will be reciprocated.
>
> — REFLECTIONS

02

Global Embeddedness of African Universities

> "
>
> *The constituents themselves – the youth and students themselves – how they use and appropriate the university as a platform for many different kinds of agendas and how these agendas interact with each other.*
>
> — REFLECTIONS

A

How can/do African universities address the disjunctures between global processes in addressing local realities?

B

What are the counter knowledge threads emerging from embeddedness of African Universities?

C

How are national and local development priorities shaping the emergence of alternative discourses?

D

How and to what extent are the knowledge threads influencing intellectual discourse?

A

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Discussion **POINTS** ?

✔ How do elements of innovation, informality, inclusiveness, commensurates and incommensurates – looking at cities through multiple dimensions/from different angles – register in these questions?

" *There are many elements, angles, dimensions, histories, power dynamics that are at play – it is big and it is complex. This difficulty and the grappling is positive evidence of the worth of the questions and the value of this process.*

— REFLECTIONS

A. How can/do African universities address the disjunctures between global processes in addressing local realities?

RESPONSES

■ This set of questions shifts us away from the problem space to the solution space - exploring the potential of urban science and knowledge experiments to amplify Pan African ethos(s) and value(s)

■ Our agenda (NAUU) is to provide insights into multi-dimensional rather than dichotomy and the predicament of global south urban science and knowledge

SYNTHESIS

Map disjunctures and resonances between university research and local urban systems.

Explain the disjunctures in relation to the politics of knowledge production.

14

A — How can/do African universities address the disjunctures between global processes in addressing local realities?

B — What are the counter knowledge threads emerging from embeddedness of African Universities?

C — How are national and local development priorities shaping the emergence of alternative discourses?

D — How and to what extent are the knowledge threads influencing intellectual discourse?

Discussion POINTS

- Could we be concerned/focus not only on the mainstream, but also about the emerging, decentralised, hybrid type of infrastructures?

- What is it to think more deeply about this and formulate questions about the shift from the formal/conventional to the emerging sector perspective?

- Could we explore the value judgments around this idea of what constitutes counter knowledge, alternative knowledge, practices of disobedience? What are we getting at when we talk about those different practices and knowledges?

- Do the rising 'private' universities offer different capacities for supporting participatory research and counter knowledge threads?

- Could some elements that are implied in these questions – around hierarchies, partnerships and collaborations in research, speak to the countering tool[s]?

B. What are the counter knowledge threads emerging from embeddedness of African Universities?

RESPONSES

- There are privatised universities within several African cities that are not necessarily academic but undertaking a whole range of different [academic] practices which are important in cities but not necessarily progressive or inclusive for many urban residents. In particular, these practices are/may be read as countering, disobedient and alternative and therefore drawing a kind of positive judgement around those practices. There are other kinds of practices which are perhaps draining, problematic, exploitative.

- Incremental and tactical responses that can begin to build dialogues with various manifestations of urban youth cultures, academic researchers, and technicians—eg. Chimurenga, Cityscapes. They can act as virtual collectives among the scores of young urbanists across the region who are initiating small research endeavours, outside but yet close to local academic institutions.

- Where these concepts come from, how they shape interaction and engagement and how it gets entrenched is critical to see how we can change that – because that history is what gives us a particular way questioning and a way of operating.

> "*Interested and excited about the transdisciplinary approach, working with non-academics – this could be a very useful approach in knowledge production.*
> — REFLECTIONS

SYNTHESIS

Identify areas of innovation and emerging alternate research agendas at African Universities?
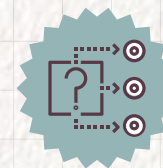
Identify what is driving these shifts?

15

A — How can/do African universities address the disjunctures between global processes in addressing local realities?

B — What are the counter knowledge threads emerging from embeddedness of African Universities?

C — How are national and local development priorities shaping the emergence of alternative discourses?

D — How and to what extent are the knowledge threads influencing intellectual discourse?

C. How are national and local development priorities shaping the emergence of alternative discourses?

RESPONSES

■ Current national and local development processes are in highly shaped by international development agencies. So, there are some tendencies for mismatch in terms of discourses that emerge.

■ We need to platform the issue of multiple histories – different from different places in Africa.

SYNTHESIS

What is the role of national and local development priorities in shaping complex/diverse alternate research agendas?

" *This lingering/long-standing assumption that urban spaces and almost everything that happens in them can be or is predictable, and anything that occurs outside of what is predictable is simply randomness. Perhaps we need to really think deeply and reflect whether this is randomness or whether this is an opportunity that we can latch onto to generate a new urban science that is multiple in nature.*

— REFLECTIONS

A — How can/do African universities address the disjunctures between global processes in addressing local realities?

B — What are the counter knowledge threads emerging from embeddedness of African Universities?

C — How are national and local development priorities shaping the emergence of alternative discourses?

D — How and to what extent are the knowledge threads influencing intellectual discourse?

Discussion POINTS **?**

✔ In relation to notions of Glocal embeddedness - the idea of continuity and discontinuity is important - when do some innovations land, and when do innovations not get recognised (through the ways in which global imperatives are articulated)?

D. How and to what extent are the knowledge threads influencing intellectual discourse?

RESPONSES

■ Looking at the translation of global to local is important - same discourses, but different meanings and implications.

■ The ownership of knowledge is important - who is the corresponding lead author and the importance of legacy.

■ The power that is derived from perceived hierarchies may be derived from funding or simply from positionalities and superiority tenets that could be often assumed. It could also emanate from the capabilities and abilities of the African intellectual association vs the colleagues coming from elsewhere.

■ The South African Journal of Town and Regional Planning article on re-thinking urbanity in Africa, raises a lot of interesting questions about rethinking the role of communities, rethinking the planning toolbox in cities, rethinking the planning education – all of which could be linked to urban research agendas and the incommensurate histories of the urban and the university and how those collide or not.

SYNTHESIS

What factors determine the extent to which context-relevant urban research influences intellectual discourse?

What opportunities and barriers are presented by the global system of knowledge production (research funding and publishing) for linking the distinctiveness of African urban realities with intellectual discourse?

Session

03

*From basic to
trans-disciplinary urban science*

A

How has the longstanding epistemological orientation of participatory research evolved into co-creation of knowledge?

B

What are the motivations behind this transition and how are transdisciplinary practices shaping the consolidation of Glocal embeddedness?

C

What is the New African university likely to become in the wake of multiple knowledges and through what pathways?

D

From knowledge threads, to counter theorizations and multiplicity of knowledges, how can Pan-Africa ethos transcend data points in knowledge hierarchy?

A

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Discussion POINTS

?

✔ What are the different kinds of alliances and ways in which we can co-create knowledge to amplify the different ethos's, counter knowledge theorisations and multiplicity of knowledges?

" *The sharing of knowledge through peer review articles, policy briefs is a continuous display and projection of global North institutions and partners to be the overseers of work from the data points across Africa. We need to be candid about this imbalance if we are going to talk about an urban African research agenda.*

— REFLECTIONS

A. How has the longstanding epistemological orientation of participatory research evolved into co-creation of knowledge?

RESPONSES

■ This point diverts us into the problem space while simultaneously making us think more deeply about it.

■ Our experience with the trans-disciplinary urban research engagements has also underscored the often-talked-about community voices but in a different way.

SYNTHESIS

To what extent has there been a shift from basic to participatory research and then to transdisciplinary knowledge co-production in African urban research?

In which urban sectors are these shifts happening?

Where do they have relevance?
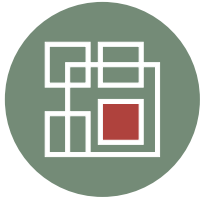
A

How has the longstanding epistemological orientation of participatory research evolved into co-creation of knowledge?
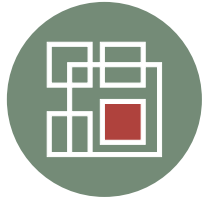
B

What are the motivations behind this transition and how are transdisciplinary practices shaping the consolidation of Glocal embeddedness?

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From knowledge threads, to counter theorizations and multiplicity of knowledges, how can Pan-Africa ethos transcend data points in knowledge hierarchy?

Discussion POINTS

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✔ Who is planning our cities, making interventions and how is this coming about?

B. What are the motivations behind this transition and how are transdisciplinary practices shaping the consolidation of Glocal embeddedness?

SYNTHESIS

What factors are driving these shifts?

What is the role of transdisciplinary practices in providing local contextual relevance to global imperatives?

" *The value of learning from youth and urban residents specifically – respecting, watching, learning, understanding their existing practices – and the trying to figure out how that ties back to participatory methods and co-production necessarily – whether it does at all, in what situation.*

— REFLECTIONS

A — How has the longstanding epistemological orientation of participatory research evolved into co-creation of knowledge?

B — What are the motivations behind this transition and how are transdisciplinary practices shaping the consolidation of Glocal embeddedness?

C — What is the New African university likely to become in the wake of multiple knowledges and through what pathways?

D — From knowledge threads, to counter theorizations and multiplicity of knowledges, how can Pan-Africa ethos transcend data points in knowledge hierarchy?

Discussion POINTS

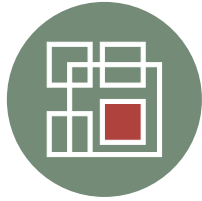✔ It was important to link imagined methodological approaches to urban research that could underpin the importance of redefining the urban African research agenda. We picked up on transdisciplinary research and asked questions on whether that is the long-standing participatory research and further, the appropriateness of framing it as a kind of expertise-based field in research vs practice-based field.

" *Issues of equity and epistemic justice - who is funding, for what reason and on whose terms? What proportion of resources go to who? And is this fair? And along the way, the archiving of data – where does it go? And who's interest is it? And is that justice?*

— REFLECTIONS

C. What is the New African university likely to become in the wake of multiple knowledges and through what pathways?

RESPONSES

■ We asked if this provides a new basis for postulations and advancing the field and urban science around global South urbanism, the embeddedness and integration of nature within urban systems – both aesthetics and landscaping and also informed by aspirational desires out of urban systems.

■ the "youthful" seizure of power …… corresponds to a deep frustration of youth with existing forms of authority and a more general willingness to take on the bureaucracies and power structures. They are increasingly indifferent to Europe, to "normative" markers of attainment, and this is beginning to be reflected in faculties of universities in these countries, with students explicitly needing universities to be more relevant, resistant to co-optation, and, interestingly, more urban—reflecting how youth are actually living their lives.

SYNTHESIS

What role can transdisciplinary research play in restructuring African universities?

Share/map instances where it is already happening – informally or as evidence of productive 'epistemic disobedience'

Identify the pathways for institutional change in African universities.

A

How has the longstanding epistemological orientation of participatory research evolved into co-creation of knowledge?

B

What are the motivations behind this transition and how are transdisciplinary practices shaping the consolidation of Glocal embeddedness?

C

What is the New African university likely to become in the wake of multiple knowledges and through what pathways?

D

From knowledge threads, to counter theorizations and multiplicity of knowledges, how can Pan-Africa ethos transcend data points in knowledge hierarchy?

Discussion POINTS

?

✓ Does African ethos speak to who's knowledge and who is at/on the table?

✓ Where do we, as academics, look to for evidence?

✓ If Twitter & Instagram – this does require time and energy to spread so wide – could this confirm the need/shift towards trans-disciplinary collaboration/inquiry if our well-trodden sources of evidence are not adequate?

" *We need to avoid a binary classifications.*

— REFLECTIONS

D. From knowledge threads, to counter theorizations and multiplicity of knowledges, how can Pan-Africa ethos transcend data points in knowledge hierarchy?

RESPONSES

■ We just don't have data on the numbers of people who have access to various services – basic information that a city needs to run effectively.

■ Twitter and Instagram accounts from cities across the region, to see just how much youth and students demand to be part of the world on their own terms, to draw attention to the vitality of their cities, of how much is going on despite the ways in which they are represented.

SYNTHESIS

What are the emerging alternate narratives on African cities?

Where are these evident?

What are the alternative sources of data?

22

URBAN
KNOWLEDGE

*Worskhop
Synthesis*

Workshop
SUMMARY

This gathering engaged with the core problematic at the heart of the network – unpacking how institutional contexts in Africa and partner universities shape the production of knowledge for just and sustainable transitions. As such, the workshop provided a space to engage expertise around moblising knowledge for just and sustainable urban transitions in Africa.

01 RESEARCH WORKING GROUP

A working group was convened based on responses to a survey of the network. The Urban Knowledges working group was led by Beth Perry with input from Kareem Buyana.

02 BROADER CONSULTATION

The theme was discussed as a working group in October 2021, following which a draft set of questions and propositions were drafted by the working group leads. These were then shared and discussed amongst other working group leads in November 2021 as the three working groups cannot be viewed in silos, due to the interconnections and interdependencies between them.

03 WORKSHOPPED POSITION PAPER

The reworked position paper was then workshopped with the working group (and other members of the NAUU network) in March.

04 SYNTHESIS SUMMARY

These syntheses are a distillation of responses shared at the three workshops. Participants' names have been removed.

ATTENDEES

UNIVERSITY OF SHEFFIELD
Vanesa Castán-Broto
Beth Perry
AbdouMaliq Simone

UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI
Elvin Nyukuri

UNIVERSITY OF GHANA
Gerald Yiran
Austin Ablo

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE TOWN
Zarina Patel
heeten bhagat
Warren Smit

" *Do we want to engage with existing architecture of funding and move forward by creating new projects and try to use it opportunistically – accepting the problems or trying to challenge, trying to transform*
— REFLECTIONS

Framing for
DISCUSSION

The working group on Urban Knowledge used as its starting point the gap identified in the Project Primer, as follows:

GAP 2

Understanding how time- and funding-bound transdisciplinary urban projects can have long-term impact and can be upscaled

Objectives of the
WORKSHOP

✓ Provide a space for network members to share knowledge and expertise around the second key network theme: Urban Knowledge.

✓ Reflect on a key question: How can/do African universities (co)produce the knowledge needed for just and sustainable transitions in Africa?

As the significance of urban Africa for global environment and development systems becomes clearer, the number of funding programmes to support transdisciplinary research on and in African cities is increasing. These interventions are a significant opportunity for challenging colonial and imperialist histories of infrastructure domination.

While there are a growing number of transdisciplinary research projects across African cities, the challenge of ensuring long-term impact beyond project cycles is a perennial threat. Given the momentum that is gathering around transdisciplinary research, our understanding of the range of partnership and knowledge coproduction engagements is limited.

Similarly, identifying opportunities to leverage the role of time and funding-bound projects in delivering impact and fostering long-term change is limited. While project timelines are a more obvious and tangible variable, we have a limited understanding of what impact means, or could mean, in African cities where questions of relevance, justice, and 'who benefits' are highly contested. Identifying points of leverage for universities to support upscaling and maximising impact based on local experimentation is critical for building the credibility of transdisciplinary and engaged research.

It is also critical to ascertain the nodes of intersection that can bring together different actors and expand the range of collaborations between university researchers, policymakers, and societal actors in driving sustainable urban development.

Initial discussions suggested there were two broad themes to examine:
a) the context of knowledge production and
b) the processes of knowledge production.

CONTEXTS OF KNOWLEDGE PRODUCTION

Contexts of knowledge production engages with the core problematic at the heart of the network - unpacking how institutional contexts in Africa and partner universities shape the production of knowledge for just and sustainable transitions. Sub-themes that emerged from discussions included:

1 Global circuits and politics of knowledge production

2 Local contexts and partnerships

3 Institutional contexts of knowledge

4 The production of epistemic justice

"

What we are trying to do here is not to try to resolve the problems but to say what are the priority issues. What is actually emerging is that we cannot talk about the one without the other. There are issues around language, intersectionality, epistemic injustice – these are all part of a set of propositions that will inform how we can get to rethinking what the new African urban university looks like. We need to follow both trains. We want to see how well these questions that we have previously landed on actually resonate now, look at them in a fresh light and which of them appear more or less significant than others.

ZARINA PATEL

01

Global circuits and politics of knowledge production

THE UNDERPINNING QUESTION: **How can the New African Urban University (NAUU) mobilise and lever international partnerships and funding schemes on their own terms to produce knowledge for just and sustainable transitions?**

Discussion POINTS

✓ If we change the word 'can' to 'do' – co-producing knowledge doesn't only have to happen within a research programme – there is a long history of academics in Africa working with different government bodies, civil society etc on urban challenges long before co-production had become a recognised discourse/issue in academia.

✓ Is epistemic justice – to produce knowledge in a just manner – not only having just outcomes but also just processes.

✓ Considering the untapped sources of funding and potential of local partnerships within countries - could we expand the 'international' to include 'local and continental'?

✓ This question in many ways linked to the issue of the funding architecture – the question is really embedded in the funding architecture

✓ How can the NAUU position itself amongst diverse local interests and partners to realise just and sustainable transitions?

✓ The impact has been on the relationships formed - rather than resulting in clear changes to the university architecture.

✓ What strategic benefits can we derive from a balance of large and small projects?

SYNTHESIS

African universities are co-producing knowledge, and have been doing so, outside of research projects for decades – so how we define and identify African university contributions is important. How significant is international partnership? And what is the role of scale in determining what counts?

The relationship between knowledge co-production and just outcomes needs to be prioritised.

How African universities mobilise internally is largely determined by the funding architecture.

A
How do African universities lever international partnerships to produce knowledge for just transitions?

B
How are they involved in global partnerships?

C
How do international and national funding regimes and financial architectures produce particular politics, positioning of and possibilities for African universities?

D
What are the institutional barriers for academics in non-African universities to enact equitable and truly co-produced partnerships?

E
What would it mean for African urban universities to lead in a global landscape?

Discussion POINTS

?

✓ Have we taken stock of cases where if the African university has been the lead, and the other consortium partners being from the North the outcomes are beneficial? This may point to the need to build capacity to make what we are suggesting possible.

"

Can we try to find alternative ways to fund things, to work more with grassroots groups?
— REFLECTIONS

A. How do African universities lever international partnerships to produce knowledge for just transitions?

RESPONSES

- 10 years of Mistra Urban Futures definitely had a big change on the relationship/collaboration between ACC and the City of Cape Town, which has directly led to the negotiation of a new, more collaborative MOU with the City of Cape Town.

SYNTHESIS

Map cases of African universities taking the lead, and identify the long term and indirect benefits.

A

How do African universities lever international partnerships to produce knowledge for just transitions?

B

How are they involved in global partnerships?

C

How do international and national funding regimes and financial architectures produce particular politics, positioning of and possibilities for African universities?

D

What are the institutional barriers for academics in non-African universities to enact equitable and truly co-produced partnerships?

E

What would it mean for African urban universities to lead in a global landscape?

Discussion POINTS ?

✔ In relation to work on the Leading Integrated Research for Agenda (LIRA) 2030 – early career African scholars co-producing knowledge for urban change across the continent – global partnerships in that programme paired universities within the African continent for research – thinking about international and global partnerships, it could be also about the project architecture.

✔ Are partnerships really transforming knowledge production in African universities? Is there an institutional shift despite evidence of examples of local knowledge partnerships within universities?

B. How are they involved in global partnerships?

RESPONSES

■ An architecture of colonial patron-client relations remains in place. Woefully underpaid faculty become available "cheap" labour to legitimate the knowledge production of multinationals and Western universities. There is rarely any capitalization of lateral relations across linguistic/political regions. Regional associations have been systematically gutted over the years in favour is extending the patronage system of expropriating African intellectual labour. Responding to existing funding calls reproduces that architecture. There is the need to evaluate the capacity that has been built over the years.

■ There are lots of good examples where African universities have partnered with each other which is a useful counter for the need of/for partners from the global North. It is useful to have African universities grapple with African problems.
- https://ifan.ucad.sn/en/
- https://www.thebritishacademy.ac.uk/publishing/journal-british-academy/9s1/
- http://www.lasdel.net/
- https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1111/anti.12820

SYNTHESIS

Identify and categorise the different ways in which African universities are partnering within and beyond the continent.

What emerges from these partnerships with regard to institutional change?

A

How do African universities lever international partnerships to produce knowledge for just transitions?

B

How are they involved in global partnerships?

C

How do international and national funding regimes and financial architectures produce particular politics, positioning of and possibilities for African universities?

D

What are the institutional barriers for academics in non-African universities to enact equitable and truly co-produced partnerships?

E

What would it mean for African urban universities to lead in a global landscape?

Discussion POINTS ?

✓ Why is the case that African colleagues feel in some senses they are not leading knowledge production?

✓ How can we change financial architectures so that funding calls do allow for African urban universities to lead consortia and how we can overcome those institutional barriers for academics? There are some quirks in structures, though very rare. Funding calls almost always requires a lead partner in the global north.

✓ How can we change the global political economy so that African institutions are allowed to put in funding proposals for calls?

✓ Understandably, a national funding agency will prioritise academic institutions from that country, but (how) can we overcome that – i.e. how can we have funding mechanisms that aren't tied to specific countries?

C. How do international and national funding regimes and financial architectures produce particular politics, positioning of and possibilities for African universities?

RESPONSES

■ Funding schemes set the agenda for research in many instances – there is a predetermined path you have to choose – you have to fall within a particular framework – so funding architecture is key.

SYNTHESIS

" *This discussion has really shown that co-production is part of a spectrum of knowledge production.*
— REFLECTIONS

What are the politics of leadership configurations in co-production projects?

What is the role of funding architectures in positioning who leads?

How can the political economy of knowledge co-production be challenged?

A — How do African universities lever international partnerships to produce knowledge for just transitions?

B — How are they involved in global partnerships?

C — How do international and national funding regimes and financial architectures produce particular politics, positioning of and possibilities for African universities?

D — **What are the institutional barriers for academics in non-African universities to enact equitable and truly co-produced partnerships?**

E — What would it mean for African urban universities to lead in a global landscape?

Discussion
POINTS

?

✓ How do we reshape ideas about knowledge production – what knowledge counts and how it counts?

✓ Regarding notions of disobedience – to what extent and under what condition is it possible to push back against some of the expectations tied to funding or against some of the research agendas that might be initiated outside of a particular context? And are there consequences for doing so? What are the grounds for discernment – is it just an individualised decision or is there an institutional position about how these international partnerships really can add value and under what conditions and when to say yes and when to say no?

✓ We do need to question the role of funding as being absolutely essential because sometimes funding is counterproductive to the production of equitable partnerships locally or otherwise, particularly locally - where funding immediately starts to change it into a client relationship – a contractual relationship whereas if you are fortunate to have the kind of academic position where you can commit without it being a funded relationship there is a different sort of parity that can be built. There are all kinds of institutional barriers that may seem minor to those within the administration but then magnify into bigger inequalities in how funding partnerships work.

D. What are the institutional barriers for academics in non-African universities to enact equitable and truly co-produced partnerships?

RESPONSES

■ Contradictions always emerge in the best designed projects – sometimes bureaucracy, sometimes the inequality is inherent in the relationship

SYNTHESIS

To what extent and under what conditions can non-African northern partners advocate for shifts in funding structures?

What practices could Northern partners adopt to ensure equal and empathic partnerships with African universities?

> " *Hardcore positivist contexts of research and the relation to co-production is important because the focus of most academic research, especially in African universities, is very much focused on the hardcore positivist quantitative research and the hardcore data.*
>
> — REFLECTIONS

Session

01

A — How do African universities lever international partnerships to produce knowledge for just transitions?

B — How are they involved in global partnerships?

C — How do international and national funding regimes and financial architectures produce particular politics, positioning of and possibilities for African universities?

D — What are the institutional barriers for academics in non-African universities to enact equitable and truly co-produced partnerships?

E — **What would it mean for African urban universities to lead in a global landscape?**

Discussion POINTS

?

✓ Different co-production exercises are really leading the production of knowledge & setting up international examples. How is the global landscape constituted so that African urban universities are positioned as not leading when, evidently, there is a lot of good research coming out of African urban universities?

✓ These are the right questions, maybe they don't go far enough?

✓ Does co-production only happen in a formalised research programme, or can it happen elsewhere? This changes what it means to lead in a global landscape. And is the global landscape significant? Is it an African landscape?

✓ Is the question looking at only African universities or in collaboration with other universities outside Africa?

✓ In Africa, how can we have Africa-wide research funding available on a much bigger scale, or how can we have global funding available on a much bigger scale that isn't linked to particular institutions or particular countries where African urban universities can apply for funding to lead multi-city projects?

E. What would it mean for African urban universities to lead in a global landscape?

RESPONSES

■ Particular African urban areas come in to stand for the whole. Nairobi, Accra, Lagos, Dar es Salaam, Kampala, Johannesburg, Cape Town become emblematic, and thus come to embody particular kinds of developments in policy and urban restructuration initiatives—that prove totally irrelevant in Brazzaville, Kinshasa, Ougadougou, N'Djamena, Niamey — and so forth.

SYNTHESIS

How can leadership of partnership projects be re-defined?

How do we ensure that representation across the continent is secured – shifting processes of gated partnerships?

> "
> *The need for quantitative data as how global goals were set out – this forces a particular research agenda in many ways. Co-production doesn't always have to be qualitative*
>
> — REFLECTIONS

02

Local contexts and partnerships

THE UNDERPINNING QUESTION: How can the NAUU position itself amongst diverse local interests and partners to realise just and sustainable transitions?

✓ When we talk about the heterogeneity of different African universities, we also need to recognise the heterogenous nature of the university itself, so who is speaking/acting on behalf of them?

✓ The internal dynamics and differences are important to consider in light of the multifaceted nature of universities in relation to this question. No university acts with a coherent set of interests.

✓ Should we be really ambitious and say co-production needs to have a political change effect or co-production is a messy process – it's not necessarily going to be directed very particularly towards a type of change.

A

WHAT IS DISTINCTIVE ABOUT DIVERSE URBAN AFRICAN CONTEXTS TO WHICH KNOWLEDGE PRODUCTION PROCESSES NEED TO RESPOND?

B

TO WHAT EXTENT ARE LOCAL KNOWLEDGE PARTNERSHIPS TRULY TRANSFORMING THE PRODUCTION OF KNOWLEDGE IN THE AFRICAN UNIVERSITY?

RESPONSE

■ There are a number of universities within the city – the knowledge produced itself is often duplicated. So, how do we encourage the production of different/ more complex knowledges? Can we gauge what has been done and what has not been done within local systems?

C

TO WHOM IS THE AFRICAN URBAN UNIVERSITY ACCOUNTABLE?

D

HOW CAN WE UNDERSTAND DISTINCTIVE RELATIONS BETWEEN URBAN UNIVERSITIES, THE STATE AND CIVIL SOCIETY?

RESPONSE

■ There are three really different types of universities – research intensive, teaching focused and the ones in between that are more engaged with the world and societal issues. Trying to understand the differences is really important to ensure useful/successful collaborations. Different types of universities are embedded into the local context in different ways.

03

Institutional contexts of knowledge production

THE UNDERPINNING QUESTIONS: Can we even talk of 'the New African Urban University' as a singular concept, given its rhizomatic nature, located in concentrated zones of political contestation? How should/could NAUUs be organised to mobilise knowledge for just and sustainable transitions?

A
HOW DO DIVERSE AFRICAN UNIVERSITIES FUNCTION IN DIFFERENT WAYS AS URBAN INSTITUTIONS?

B
HOW CAN WE MAKE DIFFERENT HISTORIES AND OPERATIONS OF AFRICAN URBAN UNIVERSITIES VISIBLE?

C
HOW ARE AFRICAN URBAN UNIVERSITIES – AND PARTNER UNIVERSITIES OUTSIDE AFRICA - ORGANISED TO SUPPORT DIFFERENT (INTER- AND TRANSDISCIPLINARY) MODES OF KNOWLEDGE PRODUCTION?

D
WHO ARE THE CONSTITUENCIES OF AFRICAN URBAN UNIVERSITIES – WHO GOES THERE, WHO GETS VALORISED TO WORK THERE, WHAT ARE THEIR MOTIVATIONS AND TRAJECTORIES?

RESPONSES

- There are different ways in which people who work at universities are measured in terms of what they do – teaching, how many students they graduate, journal articles published, social responsiveness – understanding how different universities do that in different ways might be useful.
- Some universities have tried to prioritise local government interactions, be involved in policy making, working with community organisations
- Is invisibility always problematic? Sometimes raising the profile could have unintended consequences. Sometimes playing tactically and mobilising strategically requires some kinds of invisibility to persist.
- Given how is the legitimacy of knowledge production is constructed - invisibility has its advantages. Key to this is to who should it be visible?

- There are a wide range of different virtual fora that are taking place across national borders. For example, there have been a series of important dialogues among students in Guinea, Mali, and Burkina Faso of the ways in which the university should align itself or not with the youthful take-overs on the part of junior officers in each of these countries. There are Sahelian dialogues coordinating political responses to French and US. surveillance and militarization in the regions, but more importantly aiming to reiterate Sahelian youth identities. The Sudanese revolution is another example of the ways in which young people have taken over university infrastructure to develop new policy platforms for the advent of new regime they are fighting for—many grassroots examples.
- Funding architecture, as well as, publishing practices and other well-trodden paths of academic knowledge dissemination are central.

SYNTHESIS

The NAUU is not singular, and will reflect different context specific practices and priorities.

Identify different ways in which NAUU engages with global processes?

04

The production of epistemic justice

THE UNDERPINNING QUESTION: What structural conditions are required for the NAUU to contribute to the production of epistemic justice?

SYNTHESIS

What are the strategic implications for the NAUU in contributing to the production of epistemic justice; and challenging the production of epistemic injustice/knowledge inequalities that are structurally driven. Is it necessary to choose?

What strategies can be used to address the production of epistemic justice; and to challenge systems creating knowledge inequalities.

Discussion POINTS

- ✔ Do we want to contribute to the production of epistemic justice or challenge the production of epistemic injustice?

- ✔ Epistemic justice or injustice - helps us understand co-production as a form of knowledge politics and what that means for African urban universities.

- ✔ This question is dependent on a prior understanding amongst people that the goal or possibility of co-production is epistemic justice.

- ✔ Co-production is part of a tool kit of addressing a wider sense of injustices without making major claims around how that happens.

- ✔ Can we circumvent academic gentrification which repeatedly skews attention and resource allocation to a select set of African universities? Metonymic strategies that continue to see a few urban areas as representative of the whole. This consigns the majority of African students to the shadows, which may or may not be generative in and of themselves. So, how can we prevent that academic gentrification?

- ✔ First by bearing witness to a broader landscape of intellectual work; finding ways to enhance their visibility and salience, even if we have to continuously raise concerns about the comprehensiveness of our own work and partnerships. And by accepting that our own efforts are not complete or perfect but need to be defended.

- ✔ Can we acknowledge the role of deception or at least silence in these processes' ethical deception - if we are hustling, then to who do we want to reveal the trick to?

- ✔ Epistemic legitimacy depends on justifying what we do - the informal, the insurgent should be methods too.

- ✔ The questions around hustling relate to knowing when to work together, and when to work apart (under the radar) - there needs to be a bit of both - it is indeed a tactic.

- ✔ What is gained by positioning co-production as a method. Does the word method itself act to create epistemic legitimacy?

- ✔ There are entire associations of women algorithm specialists in West Africa who can converse with anyone in Silicon Valley, but behind the scenes, they are also "fronts" for feminist methodologies in contexts that otherwise might not be receptive to them. A kind of hustle in and of itself—but completely and legitimately learned in a conventional sense. So, these questions entail a politics of performance—how to front technical competencies to do other things.

A

What kind of structures reproduce the deficits of credibility that produce epistemic injustice?

B

Who is excluded and who is not?

C

What does it mean to adopt an intersectional perspective to understand the context of knowledge production critically?


Discussion POINTS

?

✓ Are we thinking practically or theoretically? The questions about epistemic injustice or intersectionality – they are concepts that don't necessarily come from Africa.

✓ We need to understand how the institutions (and their context etc) that are engaged in these processes operate and are the cracks we find an indication of possibilities to do things differently? By looking at those structures and processes in detail – where they are open, closed, where there is porosity, where not, where things become ossified in particular ways? If we don't actually do that then it's very difficult to get beyond the kind of bureaucracies to these kinds of micro-processes that reproduce epistemic injustice.

✓ The structures that reproduce epistemic injustices are sometimes at a really granular level within institutions – that can be small things / parts of the process, decisions around timeline that actually reproduce these kinds of epistemic injustices.

A. What kind of structures reproduce the deficits of credibility that produce epistemic injustice?

SYNTHESIS
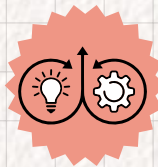
What is the role of theory and practice in re-thinking epistemic justice for and from African contexts?

What spaces exist for imagination / alternate epistemologies? How does this challenge knowledge validation structures?

" *We have got particular funding mechanisms that support the work that we do. What we need to think about in terms of how we engage the funders is, firstly, how to engage funders, but also how do we operate within our projects – are there different starting points? Can we be clear about the systems of inequality that exist within our partnerships and how we can begin to address those through our projects? How do we shift them and how do we work differently within these systems?*

— REFLECTIONS

A

What kind of structures reproduce the deficits of credibility that produce epistemic injustice?

B

Who is excluded and who is not?

C

What does it mean to adopt an intersectional perspective to understand the context of knowledge production critically?

Discussion POINTS

✓ Questions around epistemic injustice and intersectionality are critical to understanding co-production – because what co-production could/should mean. This provides us with a different kind of entry point to track potentially those particular moments within structures and systems where epistemic closure/opening happens.

✓ It could be useful to develop an archive of these practices and the potentials and constraints that have been faced. There are many examples of inventive action on the part of academics to do things—from becoming mayors to institutional building in neighbourhoods, to working out new tenure arrangements to building new infrastructures.

B. Who is excluded and who is not?

SYNTHESIS

What opportunities and constraints exist within institutional systems for shifting practices that marginalise the contribution of African universities?

" *Could we underscore the importance of our thinking practices individually and collectively – it involves our position and thinking about the upstream funding issues to which we are accountable for. Also, the downstream – to whom we are also accountable – often the relationship tends to be top-down and that means the practice has to change both ways – and how to influence especially the upstream institution is a really critical issue – transition from the deficit/support mode, capacity development, international development mode to what we learn from each other. There is a lot to learn from the African and global South perspective.*

— REFLECTIONS

A

What kind of structures reproduce the deficits of credibility that produce epistemic injustice?

B

Who is excluded and who is not?

C

What does it mean to adopt an intersectional perspective to understand the context of knowledge production critically?

Discussion POINTS ?

✓ Do we need practical steps to consolidate the future agenda for the African urban university or do we need a deeper conceptual reflection that these questions are offering? What are the grounds, challenges and outcomes?

✓ What is the balance of focusing on the practicalities of how we develop an agenda or focus on the conceptual debates – where do we want to go? There are certainly practical constraints as well as conceptual constraints.

C. What does it mean to adopt an intersectional perspective to understand the context of knowledge production critically?

SYNTHESIS
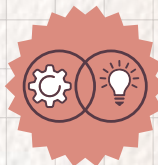
What is the role of practice and theory in incorporating an intersectional approach for engaging critically with knowledge production?

'Practice and theory' drawn from where, how and why?

"

The focus on strategies and tactics demands to a certain extent that we work both with an intent to try and change funding conditions and setting arrangements for those kinds of schemes but we are also working outside and around at the same time.

— REFLECTIONS

PROCESSES OF KNOWLEDGE PRODUCTION

Processes of knowledge production related to processes within and beyond the boundaries of the African urban university. Sub-themes that emerged from discussions included:

5 Strategies and tactics of knowledge mobilisation

6 Strategies beyond knowledge hierarchies

05

Strategies and tactics of knowledge mobilisation

THE UNDERPINNING QUESTION: Beyond methods, what strategies and tactics for knowledge mobilisation are needed for just and sustainable urban transitions?

A

WHAT ARE THE MANOEUVRES, ARRANGEMENTS AND TACTICS OF WORKING IN, AGAINST AND BEYOND THE AFRICAN URBAN UNIVERSITY?

B

WHAT KINDS OF ROLES DO ACADEMICS PLAY AS ACTIVE INTERMEDIARIES, BROKERS AND POLITICAL AGENTS IN SERVICE OF THE JUST CITY?

C

CAN CO-PRODUCTION TRANSFORM POWER RELATIONS AND IF SO HOW?

Discussion POINTS

✓ About hustling and tactics and doing things that are informal, slightly invisible and sometimes off the radar and playing the system and being disobedient – in this case invisibility is our friend.

✓ In the same way we talk about working with officials and local governments, we talk about the different ways they can be subversive and be like guerrillas in bureaucracy and do things they aren't meant to do – so academics in co-production need to do the same thing within the university – try and bend the rules as much as they can to certain things – learn how to juggle budgets in ways that budgets shouldn't be juggled. Trying to do innovation is always about trying to understand the limits of what one can do within bureaucratic frameworks. That probably applies as much to academics as to government officials.

- The recognition of knowledge being held by everyone on the basis of their experiences is a very important (r)evolutionary point. When we recognise the possibility for people to participate on the collective production of ideas about the city and collective imagination – transforming how we see the location of knowledge can help us transforming practices of knowledge production.

- What kinds of roles do academics play in co-production processes, as active intermediaries etc, is one thing, but what happens within our own institutions and what spaces we need to defend within our institutions to make visible the value of the work we do in co-production processes. As academics we need to be operating at different levels in co-production partnerships and also back within the university as activists defending the space and these practices. There is a dual role - we need to think of our roles beyond just our engagement in the co-productive process to make that have an impact on the institution and the university as an urban institution.

- We have all kinds of things in our toolbox in terms of the strategies and tactics we mobilise of which co-production is only one.

- 'Transform power relations' – Sometimes it's not about transforming but working with power relations – to achieve other forms of transformations rather than the power relations themselves. What is the tactical thing to do there? What's the end goal? What are the limits of co-production – there are other methods of knowledge production that can equally be transformative – all have their role to play.

- The strategies and tactics of knowledge mobilisation aren't about a focal gaze on co-production but wider forms of evidence and data and how they can be mobilised within different institutional contexts. Sometimes disengagement, playing the role of the disinterested academic with this kind of report-type function – maybe that's the best way to change something.

RESPONSES

SYNTHESIS

Recognising the structures of existing/persistent power relations is key to developing innovative/agile strategies/tactics that derive necessary/latent value from co-production partnerships.

06

Beyond knowledge hierarchies

THE UNDERPINNING QUESTION: How can different methodologies and methods – including but not limited to co-production – address knowledge hierarchies and epistemic exclusions?

SYNTHESIS

Knowledge co-production co-exists with other knowledge methods and types – map the spectrum of approaches being used to address urban challenges.

What are the implications for outcomes in choosing different knowledge types?

How is legitimacy of knowledge types attributed in different African contexts?

Discussion POINTS

✓ How can we synergise local knowledge and expertise in a different way and what kinds of formats and modes of knowledge production work at different moments in time?

✓ What are the differences between epistemic exclusion and epistemic injustice?

✓ Can we first understand how the knowledge hierarchies operate in different contexts before we address them?

✓ We need to understand these knowledge hierarchies better and how they create exclusions before we address them.

✓ Methodologies is one way through which the hierarchies could be realigned, but only if certain structural issues are addressed. Issues include research funding, roles, and ownership of data – there is still inaccessibility of data sets to people who were part of generating that data.

✓ Structural issues need delving. Cycles of hierarchies can be broken in meaningful and respectable ways to promote shared ownership of data and any knowledge products that are generated.

> " *Policy makers need to be exposed to different types of data – we need to have a range of different evidence.*
>
> — REFLECTIONS

Session

06

" *How we can challenge ourselves with other perspectives on co-production from outside our comfortable and current set of interests?*

— REFLECTIONS

A

B

C

D

WHAT KINDS OF URBAN SCIENCE AND KNOWLEDGE ARE NEEDED?

HOW CAN THE POLITICS OF DATA AND EXPERTISE BE NAVIGATED AND NEGOTIATED IN SERVICE OF MORE JUST OUTCOMES?

HOW CAN DIFFERENT FORMS OF KNOWLEDGE EXPERTISE BE SYNTHESISED?

WHAT IS THE ROLE OF GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION SYSTEMS (GIS), NEW TECHNOLOGIES?

DISCUSSION POINTS

- Co-production is a very particular kind of process - in order to have certain kinds of legitimacy in certain kinds of domains, traditional forms of knowledge exchange and partnership are needed.

- How do you get heard in a crisis? Where do decision-makers go for that kind of expertise and are they looking to co-produce it through these kinds of messy political processes? And are they looking to universities to fulfil these different kinds of functions?

- How do knowledge creators get together to engage, to create these particular knowledges we want to synthesise? The challenge of co-production is normally everyone being in their own silos / disciplines. So how can different forms of knowledge expertise be synthesised?
- This wasn't so much about who is undertaking knowledge production but more about the actual form of knowledge itself, what counts in particular decision-making processes – things that are codified, explicit, technological, quantifiable – having greater relevance and resonance for decision making than tacit culturally appropriate, historical, every day understandings.
- These forms of knowing are not the same, and therefore when you try to create dialogues across different forms of knowing people may not feel open to that.

- Where are the points of interface, is there potential for intersections? [between different types of data]
- There are a range of methods/ approaches to urban science of which GIS might be one kind of pillar, but there also more complex systems / theories that in themselves contain a lot of assumptions.
- When you apply GIS to study urban challenges, there are challenges on what you can see – and nevertheless it's taken as the basis for everything else.

SYNTHESIS

What is the role of knowledge co-production in shifts towards urban science? (including indictive and deductive forms of knowledge, qualitative and quantitative, including big data and information/digital technologies)

SYNTHESIS

What is the role of big data and data sciences in knowledge co-production?

E

F

WHAT ARE THE
STRENGTHS
AND LIMITS OF
TRANSDISCIPLINARY
KNOWLEDGE CO-
PRODUCTION IN
AFRICAN CITIES?

G

IN THE ABSENCE OF
CO-PRODUCTIVE
ARRANGEMENTS, WHAT
KINDS OF SCIENCE-POLICY
INTERFACES ARE NEEDED,
PARTICULARLY IN THE
CONTEXT OF COVID?

WHAT CAN DIFFERENT METHODS
CONTRIBUTE TO REALISING MORE
JUST OUTCOMES?

**DISCUSSION
POINTS**

- This theme is trying to open up beyond a focus of co-production towards other kinds of questions around data expertise, science knowledge and recognising that co-production is still a minority discourse in some senses within institutions in both contexts.

- Data platforms and urban observatories are the main way most universities interact with local and regional government – there is an emphasis on GIS, big data and smart cities. Co-production compared to that is quite a miniscule thing. A lot of the way universities interact with decision makers is probably more around the hardcore data.

- In a context where co-production is quite a miniscule part of the agenda - bigger questions around data science are really setting the knowledge hierarchies

- In an African landscape there is a hierarchy around what knowledge counts.

- This was about epistemological hierarchies - both Southern and Western positions - and what constitutes evidence? What forms of knowledge production? Trying to pierce the technocratic fantasy and the promise of big data, hard data and algorithmic specialists - more so hierarchies within forms of expertise than broader epistemological questions

- Regarding questions around GIS and new technologies, the much broader question is what kinds of urban science and knowledge are needed without supposing that is co-production.

- The question around the science policy interfaces in the context of COVID.

"

Co-production is really part of a section of knowledge production – and knowing when it is useful and when it is not and when other forms of knowledge production is useful is really important.

— REFLECTIONS

URBAN
COMPETENCIES

*Worskhop
Synthesis*

Workshop
SUMMARY

This gathering was originally planned to address what urban competencies need to be addressed across the Universities in Africa to be able to respond to these challenges. We pivoted slightly to think through how New African Urban University (NAUU) aims to contribute to the pedagogical space.

01 URBAN COMPETENCIES WORKING GROUP

A working group was convened based on responses to a survey of the network. The Urban Competencies working group was led by Dan Inkoom and Linda Robson.

02 BROADER CONSULTATION

The theme was discussed as a working group in October 2021, following which a draft set of questions and propositions were drafted by the working group leads. These were then shared and discussed amongst other working group leads in November 2021 as the three working groups cannot be viewed in silos, due to the interconnections and interdependencies between them.

03 WORKSHOPPED POSITION PAPER

The reworked position paper was then workshopped with the working group (and other members of the NAUU network) in March.

04 SYNTHESIS SUMMARY

These syntheses are a distillation of responses shared at the three workshops. Participants' names have been removed.

ATTENDEES

UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI
Elvin Nyukuri

UNIVERSITY OF GHANA
Gerald Yiran
Austin Ablo

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE TOWN
Zarina Patel
heeten bhagat

MAKERERE UNIVERSITY
Shuaib Lwasa
Paul Mukwaya

UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA
Linda Robson

KWAME NKRUMAH UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY
Dan Inkoom

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> *We need to make African scholarship more visible – through the way we teach, do research, engage with other stakeholders. We can do this through the compendium of cases studies, reflecting on our own methodological pedagogical approaches or doing research or engaging with stakeholders, so that we can bring African scholarship on to the agenda*

The working group on Urban Knowledge used as its starting point the gap identified in the Project Primer, as follows:

GAP 3

Understanding the role of curriculum and pedagogy in developing skills to support urban change

As the significance of urban Africa for global environment and development systems becomes clearer, the number of funding programmes to support transdisciplinary research on and in African cities is increasing. These interventions are a significant opportunity for challenging colonial and imperialist histories of infrastructure domination.

Developing the skills and competencies of the next generation of scholars and urban influences is a central imperative of universities. The data and knowledge requirements of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) provide an opening for the kinds of methodological and analytical skills that students require. However, the distinctiveness of theory and practice shaping urban transitions in African cities underscores the need to decolonise the curriculum in ways that reflect contextual relevance and challenge universalised assumptions.

Curriculum and new pedagogic modes are required to change the landscape of practice and research. In addition to the hard skills required to fill urban knowledge and data gaps, skills development for transdisciplinary engagement must access different teaching and learning cultures, mindsets, and approaches from those within and outside the university. Identifying the range of soft skills needed for effective partnership building is more challenging to identify and integrate into curricula. The United Nations Education for Sustainable Development initiative recognises the significance of values and attitudes to enable a more just and sustainable society for all.

In building relevant curricula and pedagogies to support urban transformations, questions that need to be engaged include: What is it that students need to know, learn and practice in order to build the New African Urban University? How is this delivered, and by whom? What does 'transdisciplinary' mean for teaching-led research and research-led teaching?

Framing for
DISCUSSION

The group acknowledged that there was a significant field of information already available, which deals with African Cities and education.

Key Questions

The focus on Urban competencies sought to address these questions:

- What and how do we currently teach about African cities?

- How does this relate to sustainable cities and Transdisciplinary agendas?

GIVEN THIS SITUATION, THIS WORKSHOP FOCUSED ON THE FOLLOWING POINTS:

Documenting the "State of the Art" Teaching approaches on the continent

A critical ideological review of genealogies

Development of a Compendium of Case Studies

INVESTIGATIONS/INQUIRIES

- Examining the notion of 'competency' in context of teaching and learning within African universities.

- Examining taxonomies and lexicons present in the pedagogical and curriculum space.

- Examining local and decolonially-framed teaching approaches from Africa.

POTENTIAL PRODUCTS

- Mapping critical ideological review of genealogies

- Developing of a Compendium of Case Studies

Unpacking the
THEME

DISTILLATION OF THE DISCUSSION

Looking at the teacher, the location of teaching, the **methodologies** adopted, the person engaged as teacher and what knowledge is shared?

How do we currently teach? Is it still colonially-influenced? What are the dangers that inherent in this? How do we prepare ourselves to become agents of change?

If we engaged **outside the classroom** – what are the advantages, who will we bring on board?

Is a PhD the only route to teaching? Can we be more diverse – invite people who work in the city – water-sellers for example – could these people come and share their experiences?

Can we expand how students learn about the city through a range of experiences & disciplines? How do we, as teachers, change the mindset of the new generation of people who will then become the city managers, planners, engineers, sociologists, people who engage the city?

DIFFERENT PEDAGOGIC MODELS

How do we engage people with other kinds of knowledge/experience beyond the academy? This includes an inter/trans/cross-disciplinary inquiry.

Key focus is how we re-examine ourselves in terms of our competencies – which includes **how we teach,** where we teach it and who we involve. Once we are able to re-frame this, teaching becomes much more flexible and we are able to bring onboard various sets of knowledge to enrich our curriculum and the way we teach.

We need to ask **what is a city, what can it give its people** and work from there onwards?

Is my conceptualisation of the city based on what I know, what I am prepared to learn from others and how does that affect my ability to work with others – in order to conceptualise what the city is and **how we can teach others to appreciate the role of the city.**

INFLUENCES THAT SHAPE TEACHING

The idea of competencies – **who has the ideas, who teaches**, who's reality counts in the classroom, if the classroom is the focal point of learning?

Who teaches, what do they teach, to whom and then **how does this relate to sustainable cities?**

THE ROLE OF CITIES

City planning is still very euro-centric imposition – what a city ought to be in a far more cosmopolitan sense than what we've had imposed. Cities in the South are still configured on the colonial/British model of land ownership, control and public administration – and still very intertwined in various systems.
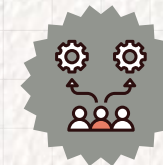
SYNTHESIS
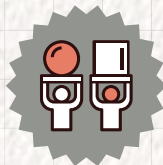
Problematise the notion of competency? What does it mean to be competent to address urban sustainability challenges? Who holds competency? How is it recognised? How is competency deployed?

What are the influences behind what we teach? How do these influences shape what, where and how teaching occurs, and who teaches?

What is the scope for different pedagogic models of teaching?

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1 Examining the notion of 'competency' in context of teaching and learning within African universities.

2 Examining taxonomies and lexicons present in the pedagogical and curriculum space.

3 Examining local and decolonially-framed teaching approaches from Africa.

4 Mapping critical ideological review of genealogies

5 Developing of a Compendium of Case Studies

1. Examining the notion of 'competency' in context of teaching and learning within African universities

"We have to be more reflective in our approaches to teaching; to be more contextual – be more innovative to make the learning process very practical, very relevant to the urban youth in particular. And also begin to reflect on our own positionality

— REFLECTION

DISTILLATION OF THE DISCUSSION

- What kind of education do we bring to the table? What does the location of my education teach me? What are the things I have learnt? How has this been consolidated? What ideas from the various places I have learnt at stay with me? Do I come back with ideas that are related or contextual to my environment? Is it still euro-centric? How do I bring those ideas, modify them, into my particular context and make them useful – for those who will listen to me? Related to the word competence – how have I been educated? And then, how does that reflect the way I teach others?

"There is need for deep thinking and for radical change – the things we have discussed shows how complex each of these issues are when it comes to curriculum and pedagogy.

— REFLECTION

- Regarding the word competency – you cannot give what you don't have. The first step in giving out something is gaining and experience based on a certain set of observations or lived experience. Going through a formal system of training also gives you a form of competence. Tertiary degrees are not necessarily indicators of competency. They are not proof of an ability to transmit/share knowledge. When we look for teaching assistants now we look for people who have soft skills such as ability to engage, who have team spirit – over and above a person's final grade. A doctoral degree cannot be a primary indicator of competency.

- Understanding what competency is underlines what we regard as teaching and learning. What skills are required for teaching? It comes down to issues of decolonising the syllabus and the way we approach the city.

- Teaching and associated theories are still very euro-centric – like trying to fix a square peg in a round hole. There are gaps/slippages between the syllabus and the lived realities.

- Competency also comes with being able to reflect my experiences, experiences of the students, the environment and actually teaching.

- Can someone who has an interdisciplinary background be competent in teaching urban studies?

- Regarding 'imagination' – it is useful because it means you are conscious of the emergence, the changes that are taking place in a particular context and trying to see how that fits into what the city will look like in the future. So, will the curriculum and teaching methodology being used be able to respond to this fluidity – the way the city changes very fast. We have to imagine how current methods can respond to changing situation within the city.

- How do you picture the city and how do you teach the city by using what emerges? You then require people with different sets of knowledges.

- Thinking about competency – potential and potentialities – competency is not just about skills, it's about how you can use and apply those skills – what potential does it give you for change?

- Part of that potential is being able to imagine and think about alternate futures – futurisms and future studies. Imagination and thinking outside the box are central to competency.

- Our systems currently are not really building competency yet – trying to understand why this is not happening and see how we can shift this, and what are the systemic barriers to building competency is important.

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**5** Developing of a Compendium of Case Studies

SYNTHESIS

DISTILLATION OF THE DISCUSSION

" *The city/urban systems that we are thinking about, and working on in Africa are quite different from other places we know. We have to change the configurations, we have to change the approach, we also have to change the way we teach urban managers and urbanists – so that they are comprehensive enough to bring all these different challenging pieces together – equity – sociocratic – emergences and contingencies – while pursuing the goals of development. We really need to change the curriculum. Competencies that are locale-specific, decolonialities, of teaching and curriculum could be speaking to that.*

— REFLECTION

- Understanding/exposing incompetency is the starting point to this conversation. And what does that mean, which will help us think about what competency means. And then what do we want competency to look like then?

- Imagination and creativity have to be part of this because part of incompetency has to do with inflexibility, disciplines and how we think about the classroom and who has authority.

- How we approach competency and how we think about African cities - we have to begin to look at it from a radically different perspective.

- Could we begin to think about transdisciplinary approaches to teaching about African cities? Because the cities are complex, dynamic, they don't follow the euro-centric logics of how cities should be, and how they should look like. We need to move towards a more transdisciplinary approach – not get boxed in disciplines – it doesn't fit how African cities work – they are fluid, constantly changing, always in motion, very youthful and dynamic population – we have to look at it from that perspective.

- Rethinking and rephrasing problems – picture of a traffic jam, with a caption – You are the traffic – we are the traffic in this jam – rethinking our position in the problem as well.

- Re: positionality - we understand what is competent and what isn't and how problems are framed from a particular framing – how do we re-examine this? We need to put this under the microscope and see how this affects our actions and shapes how we think about competencies. There are so often prescribed and particular tick-box ways and tell you the competencies we need are different.

- There are also two different levels of understanding - normatively what we would prefer to think about competency, and in the world out there, competency is still about degrees and whether you are able to do x, y & z. We need to shift away from its prescriptive usage.

- One of the questions behind this is actually understanding what this 'competency' means in different contexts and what its potential could be for changing positionalities and how we think about the urban problems and questions.

- Wondering if competency is about application - there is more to competency than knowing, doing critical to being competent.
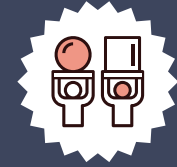
Rethink notions of competency. How can it be measured?

What is the relationship between positionality competency? How does this shape what is taught?

What is the relationship between competency and responding with relevance to local challenges?

1 — Examining the notion of 'competency' in context of teaching and learning within African universities.

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SYNTHESIS

2. Examining taxonomies and lexicons present in the pedagogical and curriculum space

DISTILLATION OF THE DISCUSSION

- Are the methods uses still relevant for the kinds of issues you want to respond to? We need to keep checking in regarding our relevance. If not, we may have to re-examine the methods we use and how they relate.

- Regarding relevance – we need to think about context and embeddedness. That context matters. Knowledge must be contextualised, must be embedded within a particular socio-cultural, socio-spatial milieu. And so, the existing taxonomies, do they help us explain African cities the way they are? This is one of the missing links, in relation to teaching.

- Can we actually bring practice/s into teaching? Using different languages exposes how dogmatic our current teaching frame work is. If we encourage this, are we going against the rules of teaching? What rules are imposed by the institution? Given these challenges of spoken teaching languages can we use different formats that transcend language?

- Language is very complex. In multilingual societies across Africa it is often difficult to translate meaning – some words/terms cannot be translated and do not always mean the same thing. Could we use visual methods, use music, drama etc – as alternative approaches/methods that we can use to teach.

- Methodologically, we need to move beyond just sitting in a classroom and talking to students – we need to think of what innovative ways can we still approach the city in a way that the meaning is not lost.

- Re: taxonomies and language – what's shaping the way in which we engage, with teaching, with curriculum, pedagogy if we recognise English is increasingly insufficient as a medium of describing the ways in which African urban spaces are being made?

- We have to begin to think more innovatively and begin to blend because given the ethnic diversity – flexibility is key. We can't fixate on this what the curriculum says, even though that may not reflect the reality on the ground.

- We are all sitting in very diverse environments – cities, student bodies, so who do we need to be relevant for? It may not necessarily be about making choices but about being explicit about where we are trying to be relevant. We can be relevant in different places and different times.

- We can't always talk about lived experience only being about the poor and the marginalised. Talking about middle class issues is equally important because that is what is perpetuating these divides.

- Who do we want it to be relevant for if the student body is so complicated/diverse?

- We need to ensure that everybody has some resonance in the classroom but that can't only be talking about informality etc because there are students who are sitting in formal systems who are not even questioning privilege and reality. So how do we get to that point of actually unsettling those privileges and making students think differently?

- Where is our entry point? Could this be working with Community Based Organisations (CBOs) – are there a whole range of different entry points that need to made evident?

- We need to be explicit about what kinds of relevance we want to achieve. And that may change over time. We might need to be relevant in one sphere in order to be relevant in another. So, understanding those causal effects is also important.

- When we looking at urban change in African cities – there is policy relevance that's definitely needed. So, are there a particular set of competencies that we require to be policy relevant? We need to be relevant to our students so that we can capture their imagination, inspire and engage them in terms of thinking differently. But how do we meet the sweet spot of being relevant to our students?

To what extent are current methods and content of teaching resonant with local contexts?

How can local / 'street' languages be included to expand current/limited taxonomies & lexicons?

What is the role of practice and engaged scholarship in curriculum development for urban change?

Explore the effectiveness of non-verbal languages to engage urban questions.

How to ensure relevance across a spectrum of needs?

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1   Examining the notion of 'competency' in context of teaching and learning within African universities.

2   Examining taxonomies and lexicons present in the pedagogical and curriculum space.

3   **Examining local and decolonially-framed teaching approaches from Africa.**

4   Mapping critical ideological review of genealogies

5   Developing of a Compendium of Case Studies

3. Examining local and decolonially-framed teaching approaches from Africa

DISTILLATION OF THE DISCUSSION

- Urban and urban planning issues still have to have very traceable threads. Order in space – who's order and how can space be configured?

- African settlements that were concentrated and planned in precolonial times - there was really sensible planning in those settlements. What do/can we learn from that?

- Not to negate the inherited colonial planning conceptual questions on order, but the issue at play here is what do we learn if we merge/fuse the two – the long past (aka: precolonial) and post-colonial? What are the possible outcomes with the hybridity of African urban cities?

- In this circumstance, what is the role of teaching? What do we learn from a fusion of the two? How do we deconstruct cities in Africa?

- We have to think about this from the teaching perspective order, who's order, for what, for whom and how is it designed?

- And also, what is the role of communities, are they supposed to adhere to the planning standards? Or can they be proactive and actively involved in the design given the aspirations of the kind of spaces the order that comes with it?

- How do we create possible, multiple types/typology of order that resonates with African urban reality? By creating this new order and urban mosaics - what are the competencies needed around integrated systems?

- So, the question that comes to teaching, looking at this decolonially-framed teaching – how do we advance integrated urban planning and development?

- Whose city? It is very fundamental – if you engage with that question then you are beginning to look at integration, rights to the city, inclusion – and so, for me, the question is how do we create a city that provides benefits for all those that live in it?

- Who should be in the city? What right do we have to the city? What city we want to see in the future? An integrated city where benefits are derived from all those in the city – and it is related to the question of inclusion – all have a right to the city.

- How can the cultures and traditions of the people that come to the city or the ones who live in the city transform those cities? Can we focus on both the architectural elements as well as human dimensions that shape the city? The kind of competencies that would be useful in this framing would have a lot to do with being sensitive and aware about the social dimensions of cities.

- The notion of equity takes inclusion further - to appreciate the difference in capabilities, the now very established fact in Africa cities, that, industrial led urban development is not the answer for inclusion and equity – there is a limit in terms of life skills for the greater part of the population in cities.

- Do we need more proactive, well-targeted approaches to bring equity – that could mean circularity, emerging sectors in the informal, new approaches to local economic development and the role of planning?

- The NAUU planner needs to appreciate all those different aspects that are important to society. Equity is very important.

- Regarding culture - if this is a form of expression of urban dwellers to assert their existence and claim rights within the city, then the competencies required of a planner is to appreciate that and be able to add on the various competencies that we have always hammered in the training undergraduate and graduate – being a communicator, an analyst, extend this to be a convenor, a facilitator of negotiations, and a communicator who is more of a sociocratic than a technocratic planner.

"
The kinds of interventions we are putting forward will already help us as researchers and educators. But we do also need to shift the system to become more equitable, to allow scholarship to become more visible – these are all important ingredients for changing how we go about shifting young minds – we teach to shift and influence young minds.
— REFLECTION

SYNTHESIS

How to design curricula that include pre-colonial, colonial and post-colonial sensibilities? How can competencies be developed to integrate these multiple influences on urban change? Does this shift strengthen the call for transdisciplinary collaborations? Archaeology, Sociology, African Studies Performance Studies, Speculative Research?

What would be included in curriculum design that is inclusive of all who have a right to the city?

What skills are required to steer responses to urban challenges that address equity imbalances?

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4 **Mapping critical ideological review of genealogies**

5 Developing of a Compendium of Case Studies

4. Mapping critical ideological review of genealogies

DISTILLATION OF THE DISCUSSION

- If we have a critical ideological review of genealogies, what would it help us understand? What would it do? Will we be able to understand those issues better if we had a mapping of ideological genealogies?

- Is there anything that is ideological and unique? Is it African or broadly urban in general?

- How can this 'mapping' be done? - through the mining of historic archives – oral histories would be very useful here. And there are a lot of photographic material that could also be a good way of understanding what there was, in terms of ideas that existed about settlements, order and how people lived. Cities like Timbuktu could provide useful insights

- The review of genealogies is there as a basis for reimagining – we need to know where we are coming from and unpack some of that in order to allow us to think differently in moving forwards. The starting point would be a challenge.

- What is an ideological review of genealogies? What, then, would be an ideological review of cities and settlements? And why is ideology important?

- The way we approach teaching now, and the kinds of things we teach, what was the basis? How did they become what they are? Why did those issues become the focal points?

- Could we be tracing what informed, underlined the kinds of curriculum we've developed, the kind of approaches we use, the methodologies, the theoretical perspectives that inform the way we teach about cities?

- If we go back and look at the ideas behind how the city was designed and how we teach then we will begin to see how we can move away from some of these issues and approach the city from a different perspective.

- If we look at a history of where these have come from to see where the points of intersection and diversions are because the history and the reality and the teaching don't always match. If there is a mismatch, then we are not training our students to be able to address the issues that are on the ground. We may be teaching uses of concepts and practices that are not fit for purpose - about in terms of language – the pedagogy that we use might not land and resonate with the kind of history that we've come from.

- The notion of cities is relatively recent idea - there are a lot of similarities reading through the histories and different locations in Africa and the coming of an urbanised or organised city where there is a focus on public health - that could be a limiting

- There is a lot of richness in African settlements before colonialism and - this could be very informative for the agenda of moving forward with the new African urban university – messy, but a useful thing.

- A critical ideological review of genealogies of pre- & post-colonial settlements – systematically well-targeted suite of curriculum and tools for skills and knowledge transfer to cities.

- It is important to go back in time, and see what there was - go beyond the colonial emergence of cities as well.

- Ideas and practices that surround the education and cities that influence the way we conceptualize, interpret and respond to contemporary and future problems.

> " *How do we disentangle – break loose a little bit from our own personal positionality linked to our histories of education and training?*
>
> — REFLECTION

SYNTHESIS

How have ideas and practices informing education on African cities evolved over time?

How have discourses on African cities shifted over time?

What is the role of history in responding to contemporary problems and future prospects for African cities? Who's version of 'history'? can we draw from multiple histories?

To what extent should and could these pathways shift to steer sustainable futures?

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1 Examining the notion of 'competency' in context of teaching and learning within African universities.

2 Examining taxonomies and lexicons present in the pedagogical and curriculum space.

3 Examining local and decolonially-framed teaching approaches from Africa.

4 Mapping critical ideological review of genealogies

5 Developing of a Compendium of Case Studies

5. Developing a Compendium of Case Studies

DISTILLATION OF THE DISCUSSION

- Are the case studies here about ideological reviews of genealogies?

- This inquiry is independent of the ideological reviews of genealogies. The point here is to curate a resource pool that is accessible. The issue is that if you take many, apart from South Africa, universities in Sub-Saharan Africa, for instance have very limited subscription to teaching and learning materials.

- The point is also to put together a database with compendium and case studies – resources that are easily accessible to students, to researchers.

- What kind of case studies should we include? And how would it depart from the existing post-colonial literature

- Beyond the traditional peer reviewed journal articles, books etc, could we also begin to think of including films, documentaries, social media, podcasts and other mediums of making information accessible.

- There are a lot of lessons that we can learn about what has already been done. We need to have an idea of what is there and what we can learn from these bodies of knowledge.

- It is about giving an alternate lexicon to the hegemonic discourses and practices that we replicate in our teaching.

- If we are to have a decolonised curriculum, it's got to be based on scholarship from us as African urban scholars.

- Regarding visibility of existing scholarship – there are so many really rich and important contributions African scholars are making to urban studies - scholarship on Africa by Africans is not always visible – this project has a resources repository – partners have been sharing resources, so we are able to read other realities and other forms of scholarship.

- How do we draw on these on alternate discourses and cases in teaching?

- Regarding the issue of accessibility - the compendium of case studies is a way of shifting practices and changing the language. It is also a way of making what we teach in the cases that we teach from more relevant to the lived realities that our students come from and to the policy environment they are responding to.

- This compendium is a way of shifting practices – through making visible and more accessible. It need not take on only the formal publications – we can take on a mix of things, that we are going to express our cities in different forms. It can also bring in that richness through different forms of writing that we then put forward urban complexities – art, drama, literature – not the usual route.

- Is there a need to curate a new compendium or could existing ones be made more accessible? In addition to the traditional academic scholarship, how do we draw from alternative media – social media, blog posts, video posts. We have to think innovatively – either make new one or make existing ones more accessible. And more user friendly to our students – who are always on their phones.

- Association of African Planning Schools (AAPS) has a case study book that looks at Africa's cities and urban issues from the eyes of the Global South - at urban knowledge residing in the Global South and try to document them through case studies – resulted in *'The Planner in Dirty Shoes'*. The aim was to try to change the narrative. It resonates with what we are trying to do now by telling our own story in ways that we are familiar and speak to our particular context.

- Focussing on putting together the scholarships that are emerging from Africa and making them accessible is critical. We must also look beyond the traditional academic scholarship.

- The landing point seems to be about a) visibility of existing scholarship, b) draw on alternate discourses and cases in teaching and c) accessibility.

" *Part of the value of having a network like this - Northern and Southern/African scholars in conversation with one another is about a beginning of a shift in power dynamics.*
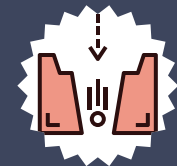
— REFLECTION

SYNTHESIS

Compiling a compendium of case studies would be a useful way to increase accessibility of teaching material in and of Africa; and serves to make visible existing scholarship in different formats.

Take stock of existing compendiums and identify gaps.

Could NUAA invite and host a broad repository of transdisciplinary research, knowledge and learning generate by African scholars?
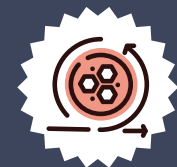
What kinds of accessibility models need to considered?

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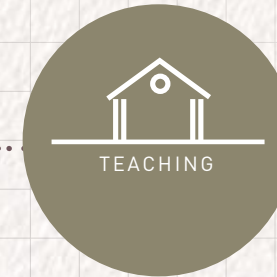
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RESOURCES

New African Urban
University Website

Worldwide Universities
Network Webpage

Inception Workshop
News Item

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PHOTOGRAPHY

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IMAGES FROM THE FOLLOWING WEBSITES:

- https://www.greenbuildingafrica.co.za/university-of-ghana-set-to-go-green/
- https://www.sheffield.ac.uk/sites/default/files/styles/two_thirds_2x/public/2020-02/270A2289.JPG.jpg?itok=ym3L29DL
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