



NAMIBIA
UNIVERSITY
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The Preliminary Scoping Study on Land Governance for NELGA Southern Africa Hub

Concept Note

Network of Excellence for Land Governance in Africa (NELGA) is a partnership of leading African universities and research institutions with proven leadership in education, training and research on land governance. The purpose of NELGA is to enhance the role of selected African Universities and academic institutions in support of land policy development, implementation and monitoring.

The **Department of Land and Property Sciences (DLPS)** at the **Namibia University of Science and Technology (NUST)** together with the **Integrated Land Management Institute (ILMI)** are at the forefront of research and outreach in the field of land governance and administration and has been selected by the African Union through the Land Policy Initiative (LPI) as a Centre of Excellence in Land Governance for Africa.

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1. BACKGROUND

To strengthen human and institutional capacities for the implementation of the AU agenda on land, the African Land Policy Centre (ALPC) in cooperation with Germany, World Bank and other partners established the Network of Excellence on Land Governance in Africa (NELGA). NELGA is a partnership of leading African universities and research institutions with proven leadership in education, training and research on land governance.

NUST was selected as a NELGA Southern Africa Node, because of its proven leadership and track record in academic education, training and research on land governance. The Node has held a series of planning meetings which led to the production of a comprehensive Concept note for the establishment of a Network of Excellence in Southern Africa (including a work plan for 2017/2018). Key work packages and activities are covered in the concept note and work plan: establish a regional node for NELGA in Southern Africa; enable academic exchange and educational activities; conduct policy dialogues and knowledge management. Each work package has activities, one of the key activities, under work package A is “Establish[ing] a regional node for NELGA Southern Africa”, is carrying out a “scoping study” for the NELGA Southern Africa node.

Academic exchange is part of work package B, and it is crucial and in support of the objectives of this study. This work package emphasizes the need to encourage and support sustainable relationships between institutions through the establishment of linkages and relationships between faculty members of the various network partners.

2. BACKGROUND

The NELGA southern African node will conduct a research scoping study as part of its main activities. The main objectives of the study are as follows;

- (1) explore the most important issues related to land governance in Southern Africa,
- (2) identify contribution of academia to sustainable land policy in Southern Africa, and
- (3) determine best practices and lessons learnt.

This exercise will lead to increased understanding of the partner institutions. It will help to discuss the inputs that the partner institutions would like and are able to make to the network. The study findings will be used to enhance effective implementation of NELGA activities.

3. BACKGROUND

The study will be conducted in 2018 and will involve literature review. It will involve looking at secondary data, including internet research. Primary data will be conducted through consultations with various stakeholders such as academic and research institutions by way of semi-structure questionnaires **(Annex A, B)**. A validation workshop with relevant stakeholders will be held to adopt the research plan.

3.1 Desk Study

The process of compiling a list of potential partner academic and research institutions (see attachments, **table 2: Academic institutions & table 3: Research institutions**) has been completed in July 2017. This involved internet research by obtaining relevant university faculties/departments and as well as contact persons. The process also involved reconciling and screening existing lists of potential partner institutions obtained by NUST, SLGA and ALPC. The final list was already instrumental in the selection of representatives of partner institutions who represented the network at the Land Governance and policy conferences which was held in Pretoria, South Africa on 15-17 August 2017 and Addis Ababa Ethiopia on 14-17 November 2017 respectively. This further led to the identification of representatives from partner institutions, some of whom are already actively involved in the activities of the network.

3.2 Stakeholders Consultations

The node will conduct visits to the current and potential partner institutions to hold meetings, focused group discussions and individual interviews using semi-structured questions to guide the discussions. These institutions will include selected academic and research institutions.

3.2.1 *Academic Institutions*

The relevant representatives of the NUST node will carry out missions to various partner institutions. The missions will provide an opportunity to understand the mandate of the partner institutions. The exercise will help to understand the partners' anticipated level of commitment to the network in order to form lasting relationships with the representatives of the partner institutions. It will also help to understand the areas of strength of the various partner institutions as well as the local environment in which the partner institutions operate (political, research institutions, NGO's and other academic institutions). The objective is to facilitate better cooperation and provide better support. The exercise will ensure continuity of the relationship beyond representatives of the such institutions. Currently the node has managed to bring on board the following partner institutions:

- University of Namibia (UNAM),
- University of Zimbabwe
- University of Zambia (UNZA)
- University of Botswana
- Ba Isago University (Botswana)
- The Polytechnic University of Malawi
- University of Malawi
- Sam Moyo Institute of Agrarian Studies (Zimbabwe)
- Copperbelt University Kitwe (Zambia)

The node also has existing relationships with the Institute for Poverty, Land and Agrarian Studies (PLAAS) at the University of the Western Cape (UWC), the University of Pretoria (UP) and the University of Cape Town (UCT). The node intends to continue reaching out

to the other universities in the Southern African countries and among these are; Mozambique, Angola, Lesotho and the Kingdom of eSwatini (former Swaziland) (see table 1).

3.2.2 *Research Institutions*

Relevant institutions such as research institutions (including selected research NGO's) will be selected for the interviews. Some of these institutions are directly involved in the practical aspects of land governance and land reform in general. It is important to determine the contributions and role of such institutions to land governance. It is also crucial to gauge the existing relations of such institutions with academic institutions.

3.3 Workshops To Validate and Adopt Research Plan

The validation and adoption of the research plan will be done after the desktop study and stakeholder consultations are completed. This workshop will be conducted during the week of 19-23 February 2017. Partners will attend the workshop to provide input into the scoping study. Consensus will be reached on various key aspects of the study. Partners will be expected to commit to specific undertakings as per their willingness and capacity.

4. KEY ASPECTS OF THE STUDY

The study should focus on issues related to Land Governance at national and more importantly at regional level. This will ensure that all the study objectives are achieved.

4.1 Land Governance in Southern Africa

The study will explore various issues related to land governance in Southern Africa. It is also of paramount importance to assess the contribution of academia to sustainable land policy in Southern Africa. It is crucial to explore the notion that academic institutions/universities do not make significant impact outside their academic or policy circles. In other words, whether academic do not directly make impact in communities. It is established that many universities do not make an effort to ensure that their academic papers are accessible to the non-academic public. It is said that even research reports meant for specific target groups do not see the light of day. This is attributed to the format in which this reports are presented, because even if they are accessible they are not read. Some universities/institutes like PLAAS have developed a strategy to develop user-friendly format of their academic research publications. PLAAS converts these materials into reports, video clips (sub-titles), posters, PowerPoints, journals and policy briefs, which are targeted at various audiences which are not always reached by other academic institutions e.g. politicians, policy makers, farmers, women, youth and laymen general.

The study should unpack relevant case studies of good land governance in Southern Africa. This is very important to determine best practices and lessons learnt. It helps to see what factors have been put in place to achieve good land governance. The study is also expected to present challenges pertaining to land governance in Southern Africa.

4.2 Land Governance in Southern Africa

There are Southern African countries which shares similar colonial history. Most of these countries' struggle for independence was focused in restoring land which was forcefully occupied by the colonisers. Countries like South African, Zimbabwe and Namibia fall in this category. Predictably, these countries face similar post-independence land reform challenges. Most productive land was occupied by the minority whites at the expense of the black indigenous majorities. It is also not a surprise that these specific countries have engaged in a process of land reform to address such imbalances. In general, many Southern African countries continues to battle with the following issues: land reform, land tenure insecurity in communal areas (especially women), lack of access to urban land (e.g. affordability issues), land grabbing (commercialization of communal land) by multinationals corporations and elites for agricultural purposes (e.g. forestry and other business ventures).

For example, the pace of land reform in Namibia is very slow. The government pursues the principle of willing-buyer-willing seller. This principle is blamed for the slow pace of land distribution. The supply for land is very low, while the demand is very high. Landlessness is one of the catalyst for national discontentment towards the governments of the day. It is also increasing the resources conflicts among individuals and communities.

4.3 Area of Expertise and Strength by Various Southern African Academic Institutions

It is crucial for partner institutions to mutually share and identify their areas of expertise for effective cooperation. It is important to note that this NELGA partnership is not about competition. It is about complementing each other's efforts into order to achieve a win-win scenario. This can open opportunities for joint research, staff and student exchange, sharing of information (data) and cooperation on offering master classes among others. Various institutions have proven their strength in various areas such as research reports, graduate's profiles, running multiple projects, as well as cooperation with other universities and networks.

5. BEST PRACTICES AND LESSONS LEARNED

It is crucial to look at best practices and lessons learnt by participating universities with regards to land management and land policy. The study will discuss exemplary cases in line with the key aspects: land governance, analysis of similar networks and issues of common interest among partners among others. NELGA's mode of operation as discussed at the analysis of networks will also be discussed. Besides academic institutions, it is also crucial to include Research institutions not only in theory but also in practice. Some countries have fewer universities, hence there is a small pool of academics with experience in land-related matters. In addition, relevant research institutions (including selected government institutions and agencies, as well as NGO's) are often called upon to provide input during curriculum development.

6. OTHER LAND RELATED ISSUES IN SOUTHERN AFRICA

The NELGA Southern African node was launched on 19 February 2018 at the Namibia University of Science and Technology (NUST) in Windhoek, Namibia. The launch was attended by many representatives from various academic and research (including non-research) institutions in Southern Africa and beyond: Namibia, South Africa, Malawi, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Botswana, Ethiopia and Tanzania (Table 1, attendance list). One of the event which was planned during the week of the launch was the discussion on the Regional Research Scoping Study. The aim was to solicit input from the partner institutions in Southern Africa which could lead to the drafting of the research proposal in this regard. The presentation was made to the partners in attendance, who put forward the following land-related issues for consideration in the study:

- Consultation with the SADC body responsible for land reform
- The impact of mining on other land uses
- Revisiting the definition of land
- The social dimension of land (livelihood, women and youth)
- Agrarian reform (production, support to beneficiaries, extension)
- Rural-urban migration
- Relation between land and water
- Relation between land and soil quality
- Coordination and alignment of land related policy (to avoid contradiction and conflict)
- Land governance
- Land ownership versus access (Ownership, but no access e.g. SA)
- Roles of Traditional Authorities (Botswana case studies, best practices)

- Impact of land tenure (formalization)
- Expropriation of land without compensation
- Expansion of townships into communal land lands (modern day forced removals)

7. CONCLUSION

The study will discuss the key aspects. Findings will be discussed and will have comprehensive recommendations.

ANNEXURES: SEMI-STRUCTURED QUESTIONNERES FOR ACADEMIC AND RESEARCH INSTITUTIONS**Annex A: Pre-Structured Question for Academic Institutions**

1. Name and background of the University
2. Faculties and departments
3. Existence of a Department focused on land issues
4. Understanding of Land Governance, Management and administration
5. Record of land-related research by the university
6. What are the key land management issues in the country?
7. What are the key policy implementation challenges?
8. What the exemplary or good land governance cases in the country
9. What is the area of strength for the university which can benefit other universities [e.g. research, public outreach, journals etc.]?
10. Projects and networks linked to the Land department
11. The existing processes and procedures of curriculum development

Annex B: Pre-Structured Question for Research Institutions

1. Name and background to the organisation
2. Understanding of Land Governance, Management and administration
3. Record of land related research by the institution
4. What are the key land management issues in the country?
5. What are the key policy implementation challenges?
6. What the exemplary or good land governance cases in the country?

LIST OF TABLES: ATTENDANCE LISTS, ACADEMIC AND RESEARCH INSTITUTIONS

Table 1: Attendance List – NELGA Launch and Scoping Study Consultation

Table 2: List of Academic Institutions

Table 3: List of Research Institutions