



NAMIBIA
UNIVERSITY
OF SCIENCE AND
TECHNOLOGY



Southern African Node

Establishment of a Network of Excellence for Land Governance in Southern Africa

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. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

Equitable access and secure rights to land have long been championed as a means to improving livelihoods and promoting economic development. Agenda 2063 of the African Union call for the a “prosperous Africa based on inclusive growth and sustainable development”. It also highlights the importance of good governance and the rule of law as a means in the transformation of Africa and realizing the African Renaissance.

1.1 The Land Policy Initiative and the African Agenda on Land

The African Land Policy Initiative (LPI) was established in 2006 as a joint initiative of the African Union Commission (AUC), the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), and the African Development Bank (AfDB). To date, the most prominent achievement of the LPI has been the development of a Framework and Guidelines on Land Policy in Africa (F&G), adopted by the African Ministers responsible for land in April 2009, and further endorsed by African heads of State and Government through a Declaration on Land Issues and Challenges in Africa in July 2009. The F&G intends to facilitate the development and implementation of national land policies that foster economic growth and secure livelihoods of African people. Building on these achievements, the LPI continues the second phase of its activities aimed at assisting member States and other stakeholders in the implementation of the Declaration on Land Issues and Challenges in Africa in accordance with the Framework and Guidelines on Land Policy in Africa, in order to achieve socio-economic development, peace and security and environmental sustainability.

1.2 The Network of Excellence on Land Governance in Africa

The programme “Strengthening Advisory Capacities for Land Governance in Africa (SLGA)” is financed by the German Government and implemented in cooperation with LPI and other AU institutions as well as the World Bank. SLGA aims to strengthen human and institutional capacities for the implementation of sustainable and development-oriented land policies in Africa.

One of the main areas of action of SLGA is the establishment of an African Network of Excellence on Land Governance (NELGA) under the leadership of LPI. NELGA is a partnership of various African universities and tertiary/research institutions, which have proven leadership in academic education, training and research in one or more aspects of land governance. It will establish linkages with other universities and networks of research and policy think tanks in Africa and the rest of world, which have demonstrable mandate, experience and/or interest in African land governance issues. By doing this, South – South dialogue and knowledge sharing on land issues will be fostered.

So far around 25 member institutions across Africa have been selected for NELGA based on a comprehensive mapping study. NELGA regional nodes will be identified and financially supported to ensure

better implementation and coordination of its activities in the different African regions. Currently, the following regional nodes have been selected; (1) Ardhi University in Tanzania for East Africa, (2) Namibia University of Science and Technology, (3) Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology in Ghana for West Africa and (4) Institut Agronomique et Vétérinaire Hassan II in Morocco for North Africa. A node for Central Africa will be selected before the end of 2017.

1.3 Namibia University of Science and Technology

The Namibia University of Science and Technology (NUST) aims to become the leading university in Africa known for being a trendsetter in higher education and applied research internationally. Key goals for NUST include “*knowledge creation*” in the applied and multidisciplinary arenas and contributing to economic and social development. It aims to do this through the promotion and facilitation of innovation, technology development and knowledge transfer in conjunction with national and international partnerships with other universities, institutions and organisations.

The Department of Land and Property Sciences (DLPS) at NUST together with the Integrated Land Management Institute (ILMI) are playing a leading role in research and outreach in the field of land governance and administration. The Department offers relevant degrees at undergraduate and post-graduate level including master and doctorate degrees. Together with the ILMI, the Department has come to be seen as one of the leading authorities in Namibia when it comes to land governance. The Department and ILMI are known for having an active capacity building programme, has regular outreach activities, publishes working papers, conducts seminars and regularly hosts international speakers on a variety of topics. The current research framework on “Land Livelihoods and Housing” serves as a focal point for the research activities and is helping to drive forward the agenda on land and governance in relation to its livelihood impacts. The Department is also actively engaged in developing policy briefs and providing inputs at a policy level to ensure that the creation of knowledge leads to and can support processes for more informed policy making.

This makes the University an ideal partner for the SLGA project in the establishment of NELGA.

2. PROJECT OBJECTIVE

The overall objective of the programme is to “Strengthen human and institutional capacities by establishing a Network of Excellence on Land Governance amongst selected Southern African universities and research institutions.

The objective is based on the overall NELGA concept developed by LPI in 2015. It will be achieved by implementation of the following work packages:

- A) Establish a regional node for NELGA in Southern Africa at the Department of Land and Property Sciences (DLPS) at NUST
- B) Establish networks and academic exchange with other relevant southern African universities and other institutions as well as relevant stakeholders outside Africa
- C) Educational activities to share knowledge, develop capacity and improve curricula in order to improve land administration and good governance
- D) Conduct national and regional land governance related policy dialogues with government organizations, research institutions, civil society and other academia
- E) Knowledge management for the sharing, retention, curation and archiving of best practices in land administration and good governance

3. PROJECT DESCRIPTION AND ACTIVITIES

The main goal of the project is to establish a regional node for NELGA in southern Africa in order to support the development of capacity in land governance in the region. The first phase of the project will consist of a regional scoping study to identify regional partners and their research as it relates to governance and informed policy making. This should allow the different partners to exchange experiences and practices which could culminate in the establishment of a Regional Journal of Land Governance where the research can be documented. At a less formal levels outreach activities and events at a variety of scales should support the documentation of experiences and practices that are not so academic in nature and where the target audience are more varied. This will also include at least one major training event such as the proposed land governance training for local government officials, which can also be offered by other partners in the network. The project will also aim to empower partners to participate in the policy making process through the hosting of policy dialogues, master classes, communities of practice and a land policy conference. The experiences and practices will be recorded and should be managed in an appropriate knowledge management system in order to contribute to the sustainable development and curation of knowledge and outputs produced.

3.1 Work Package A: Establish the Regional Node for NELGA in Southern Africa

The activities of the first work package are largely internal in order to ensure that the Department is suitably equipped and prepared to carry out the functions as a regional node. The preparedness is largely centered around the administrative capacity to carry out the additional workload resulting from the NELGA project activities. It is also appropriate to conduct a regional overview and assessment in terms of the available capacity and current research efforts directed towards the issue of land administration and governance.

i. Activity A-1: Administration and Coordination of Project

This activity is designed to ensure the Department meets all obligations and expectations with regards to the implementation and completion of the project activities. This activity will include recruitment of service providers (e.g. consultants, moderators for master classes, workshops and conferences). It will also involve general contract management, budgeting, planning and implementation of NELGA SADC activities and supervision of the SLGA Technical Advisor. The work includes the regular reporting, knowledge management and feedback to the GIZ and partners in the implementation of this project.

ii. Activity A-2: Regional Research Scoping Study (Desk Review)

This activity is envisaged to have two components focusing on the development of potential research partners as well as the development of a scoping study on regionally relevant research outcomes and projects in the field of land governance.

The first component will be the carrying out of a literature review of the available resources in the field of land governance over the last twenty years or so. Some of the issues that such a study will address include research on the impact of land administration, research on policy development in relation to land administration. It will also seek out literature and approaches that could be used by academics in order to translate/diffuse their research outcomes into policy statements or similar.

The second component of this study/activity will be to, amongst others, use the desk preview to identify suitable partners/associates for the regional network. This could result in a database of not only partners, but stakeholders as well and together they can assist in the development of a regional programme of activities and actions.

To achieve the outcome of a regionally relevant research scoping study it would require a literature review/desk study as well as regional travel to verify/validate the scoping study with the relevant universities and partners and would require some regional travel.

iii. Activity A-3: Workshops to Validate Regional Research Scoping Study

The preliminary regional research scoping study, upon the preliminary identification of partners, should be validated and presented to the partners at a series of small regional workshops/meetings or other platforms. This will allow for the introduction of additional comments and feedback into the research scoping study as well as to allow for the refinement of the study. It also provides an

opportunity to assess the partners with regards to their interest and potential contribution in the NELGA project.

iv. *Activity A-4: Workshop to Adopt the Regional Research Scoping Study*

It is expected that a final workshop will be held in Namibia to discuss and adopt the regional research scoping study. The preliminary partners identified should be invited to the workshop. This workshop should also be used as an opportunity to officially launch the NELGA programme at NUST and in the region. At the workshop inputs from partners should also be sought in the development of a relevant programme of action for the remainder of the NELGA project, including specific activities that the partner institutions in the network could host or facilitate.

v. *Activity A-5: Staff Capacity Development*

In order to ensure that the academic staff responsible for implementing the major functions of the NELGA hub play a leading role in their disciplines and related activities, it would be prudent to arrange a number of capacity development activities in support of this. Activities appropriate in this context could include staff exchanges, workshops and specialist seminars in order to ensure that staff members remain on the forefront of their field. Topics for workshops and seminars could include governance, political economy, systems thinking and other topics as deemed appropriate. Exchanges could also take place with our international partners in order to ensure that staff members can spend some time working with other senior academics at partner universities on specific activities.

3.2 Work Package B: Academic Exchange and Support

The academic exchange and support activity is geared towards encouraging and supporting sustainable relationships between institutions through the establishment of linkages and relationships between faculty members of the various network partners. Opportunities for sustainable cooperation is primarily driven by individuals who seek out opportunities to drive forward cooperation, publication and joint research programmes.

vi. *Activity B-1: Regional Travel and Academic Exchange*

The team leader and staff will need to travel to partner countries in order to promote, implement and support the NELGA programme activities. These trips are in support of the activities such as communities of practice, the delivery of master classes, attendance at land policy events and conferences or to support the partners in the implementation of their activities.

vii. *Activity B-2: Mobile Field Office*

In order to ensure that programme activities are fully implemented at all locations the Department of Land and Property Sciences as the NELGA Node should acquire hardware so as to be able to function as a mobile office. This limited acquisition of equipment will allow the department to be able to deliver lectures, short courses and master classes at most locations in the region. It should also allow for workshops and discussions to be hosted in a manner that allows for feedback and recording of the sessions to make the most effective use of the staff. The mobile field office would include the purchase of equipment such as two laptops, a mobile printer, a mobile scanner, a ZOPF suitcase, a camera, an ipad or other equipment identified as necessary.

viii. *Activity B-3: NELGA Student and Visiting Staff Centre*

To facilitate academic exchange and in order to be able to host researchers and other academics from partner universities it would be appropriate to be able to host a reception centre for NELGA. This could serve the purpose as a focal point for the department and NELGA activities around the issues of land governance. The importance of these casual interactions around the “coffee dispenser” are not to be underestimated and play an important role in opening up discussions on the possibilities of research outside of the stricter confines of defined project activities.

The Centre would also serve as a resource hub where we can establish a special collection library on land governance. Support from the main library could be sought for this purpose and we would make use of the available library services. We would need basic equipment such as whiteboards and flip chart stands for meeting and discussions, and a coffee machine. This could be combined with the administration office therefore we might need a small printer for the secretary and a larger printer that can print at least A2 format. There might be a need for some basic furniture and a couple of cabinets as well as filing material etc. This would also include a component for the purchase of books and journal subscriptions.

ix. *Activity B-4: Regional Journal of Land Governance*

Upon determining the feasibility of establishing a Journal of Land Governance, if found feasible, research and practices relating to land governance in the region may be documented and shared. Research journals are the primary medium for the sharing of academic work and allows for the validation of such work by other academics.

The DLPS has the capacity to host the regional journal on land governance, but it would have to be supported by the partners in the network to ensure that publications are sufficient in quality and

quantity for the journal to be considered a success. The journal will be peer-reviewed by reputable academics and land experts; and will be made available in both electronic and hardcopy formats. There will be costs associated with the setting up of a journal in terms of man hours and getting support for the journal. A layout design for submissions needs to be generated as well as a cover and perhaps additional support from other NELGA partners.

3.3 Work Package C: Educational and Training Activities

The activities in the work package are designed to ensure that there is sufficient educational and training interventions conducted in the region to support the improvement of governance of land. The training activities are geared, not only towards the partner institutions, but also towards the practitioners, administrators and implementers of land governance programmes in the region. These activities are designed in such a way so that they may support the policy makers by providing appropriate information for their consideration in the policy making processes.

x. *Activity C-1: Regional Outreach Plan*

The NELGA coordinator and the relevant LPS staff members at NUST will develop a regional outreach plan. The plan will outline the timeline for all the outreach or educational related activities with regards to SLGA and NELGA in particular. This should expand on the current departmental outreach plan to make it more regionally relevant and to scale up the activities to the regional level.

xi. *Activity C-2: Outreach Events*

The outreach plan will have two components, one which is more promotional in nature, and the second which is designed around engaging with stakeholders in a more substantive manner.

The DLPS will carry out all the various outreach activities as outlined in the plan both at national and regional levels. These events serve to inform the public about NELGA and includes the launch of NELGA and making use of the media (e.g. radio, tv and print). This could also include using other platforms such as national and regional conferences (including workshops) on land policy and land governance. Ideally the plan will be designed in collaboration with the NUST Department of Marketing and Communications to report on the NELGA activities in the local newspapers.

The outreach events could be typical routine events such as brown bag meetings, lunch talks and seminars which will follow a more or less pre-defined schedule for the semester. Other brown bag events could be more spontaneous and follow on events in local, regional and international media where we are able to make a contribution, or where opportunities for speakers present themselves

in relation to the major theme of land governance naturally. The activities should expand outreach to include at least one event in two countries in the region in 2018. We could also consider having another regional event in Namibia in the calendar year. This could be in the form of a land conference. Such a conference would also allow us to present research and generate research ideas from the region. Efforts should also be made to support other countries to host events with minimal support from the node.

xii. Activity C-3: Land Governance Training

It is anticipated that there should be at least one major training on land governance. Good land governance is one of the key capacities that need to be developed during the NELGA programme, and as such it is important to provide a refresher/introductory course on land governance to ensure that there is some consistency and a common understanding, as well as to define the universe of discourse. The delivery of such a course could have two aspects. The first is the training of trainers to ensure that local capacity is developed and then supported to be able to deliver the course in the region.

3.4 Work Package D: Conduct Policy Dialogues

The development of instruments and activities to support informed policy making is one of the key objectives of NELGA and supports the AU Agenda on land. This is however a far from straightforward process and will require consistent, sustained and differentiated interventions at a variety of levels and scales in order to contribute meaningfully to the policy making processes.

xiii. Activity D-1: Land Policy Workshop

The Global Land Tool Network (GLTN's) Urban CSO Cluster and the Solid Ground Campaign of Habitat for Humanity in Partnership with NUST and NELGA are planning a conference on improving land governance and management in Africa. The aim is to develop capacity in land governance and policy making processes appropriate for the African context. It will engage with policy makers such as government officials and African parliamentarians on best practices, principles of participation, evidence and data driven approaches to policy making. It will engage in broad-based discussions with civil society organisations and other actors in relation to evictions and land grabs in a bid to find common approaches and appropriate policy responses.

xiv. Activity D-2: Master Classes

Master Classes as we see them are offered to students, or the attendees, in a specific discipline by an expert in that discipline. The Master Classes can take many forms, be hands on and practical, or may

be theoretical and involve case studies, present research findings or involve industry practitioners sharing their expertise. What is common to the master classes is that they take the attendees through specialised training and experiences to deepen their understanding or skill in a particular discipline. At least four master classes on a variety of topics are proposed for each quarter of the calendar year in 2018.

xv. *Activity D-3: Community of Practice*

Communities of learning are groups that get together for peer learning purposes, and this can take numerous formats. Peer learning and communities of practice are important tools to be deployed in the development of capacities and best practices in land governance in the region. Communities of practice are increasingly taking place online as well, but the efficacy of this in the African context is not yet clear. It is also important to re-enforce the bonds and relationships that make the communities coalesce around a specific domain. It is proposed that at least one community of practice be initiated and that they should be encouraged or supported to meet at least four times per year.

3.5 Work Package E: Knowledge Management

This is the process of managing and using the information created by an organisation for the benefit of making the best use of such collective knowledge. It will allow us to curate, share and use the information collected and generated during the project for the best practices in land administration and good governance. Two approaches are considered for the work package; namely a database or repository for best practices and other documents collected and generated during the course of the projects, and secondly a repository for the data, indicators and information required for the project management.

xvi. *Activity E-1: Document and Disseminate Best Practices and Lessons Learned*

Document and disseminate best practices and lessons learned of participating universities in the area of land management and land policy. It is important that the activities such as outreach events, master classes, seminars, communities of practice, brown bag lunches, working papers, policy briefs and others are appropriately documented and curated for storage and archiving in a database. This requires that standards and templates be created for the documentation of the various types of events and documents and that they are appropriately archived in the library under the NELGA directory in an open access database for further use.

xvii. Activity E-2: Repository for Data, Indicators and Land Information

Coordinate activities within Southern Africa to establish a repository for data, indicators and land information on land policy and land governance in Africa.

4. STAFF CONCEPT

NUST will implement the project as described above using the following staff concept. DLPS will be responsible for the implementation and coordination of the project:

- Project Coordinator: Mr Charl-Thom Bayer
- Project Administrator: Ms Muna Anguwo

-END-