

ISULabaNtu

Community-led Upgrading for Self-Reliance in South Africa

Integrated Construction and Environmental Management Systems in Informal Settlements

Newsletter – December 2017

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Project Summary

Across Africa, informal settlements struggle with poor housing, limited services and environmental hazards. Despite an increasing emphasis on participatory upgrading, communities are often constrained by lack of resources or technical knowledge to lead these processes, particularly when urban policies are designed and implemented without a clear understanding of local conditions. [ISULabaNtu](#) seeks to support communities by strengthening their capacity to guide urban development themselves. With a focus on Durban Metropolitan Area, South Africa, [ISULabaNtu](#) is undertaking research, capacity building and community mapping, in collaboration with residents, to feed into the creation of an integrated environmental and construction management toolkit. The project is also exploring how findings can be applied elsewhere. These activities are not only building the capacity of residents on community-led approaches to construction management and service provision, but also promoting the creation of partnerships with other stakeholders such as local businesses, policy makers and academics.



Case studies: Piesang River (L) and Namibia Stop 8 (R) in Durban

The team is led by Dr Maria Christina Georgiadou from the [Department of Property and Construction](#), University of Westminster, together with Dr Isis Nunez Ferrera, Ben Fagan-Watson and Dr Pete Barbrook-Johnson from the [Policy Studies Institute](#) and Dr Priti Parikh from UCL [Civil Environmental and Geomatic Engineering](#). Colleagues from the [School of Built Environment and Development Studies](#) and the [Pollution Research Group](#) at the University of KwaZulu-Natal are led by Dr Claudia Loggia, Prof Chris Buckley and Dr Alfred Odindo. Collaborators from [uTshani Fund](#), a local South African NGO, are also part of the team and advisory services are provided by [EcoLtd](#), an independent consultancy focusing on international development.



What we've been doing in 2017...

Phase 2 Fieldwork Complete

May saw the completion of the third of three fieldwork visits by our Phase 2 team to Durban. This phase of the project has used participatory action-research tools to coproduce knowledge with informal settlement communities on housing issues, upgrading processes, decision-making and urban development in Durban.



We also interviewed and undertook focus groups with wider stakeholders in the city, to map synergies between communities' activities and more formal state and non-governmental organisations' plans and approaches. During all three trips we were fortunate to have the invaluable support of Sibongile Buthelezi and Madudu Khumalo, research staff at UKZN, and masters' students from UKZN.



2017 AMPS Conference on Cities, Communities and Homes: Is the Urban Future Liveable?

In June, Dr Christina Georgiadou and Dr Claudia Loggia attended the AMPS conference in Derby, UK, and presented ISULabaNtu work. See architecturemps.com/derbyconference/

Royal Society training workshops

Dr Christina Georgiadou with Martin Ball and Rob Garvey from the Department of Property and Construction (University of Westminster) visited Durban this February. They joined Dr Claudia Loggia to deliver a three-day Royal Society funded training course on Project Management, Procurement and Digital Construction at UKZN.



The training workshops were attended by UKZN academics and early career researchers, as well as, planners, engineers and architects from eThekweni municipality, and industry practitioners. Each session included a discussion on the application of the training material in the area of low-income housing and informal settlements upgrading.

eThekweni municipality workshop

During May we were delighted to host a lively workshop, bringing together a range of experts and decision-makers from across eThekweni municipality.



Attendees were invited to reflect on our work, and share their own experiences. Their input and feedback will be invaluable in shaping our work in Phase 5, and in embedding our efforts in wider activities in Durban.



Cont'd...What we've been doing in 2017...

Engaging with GCRF

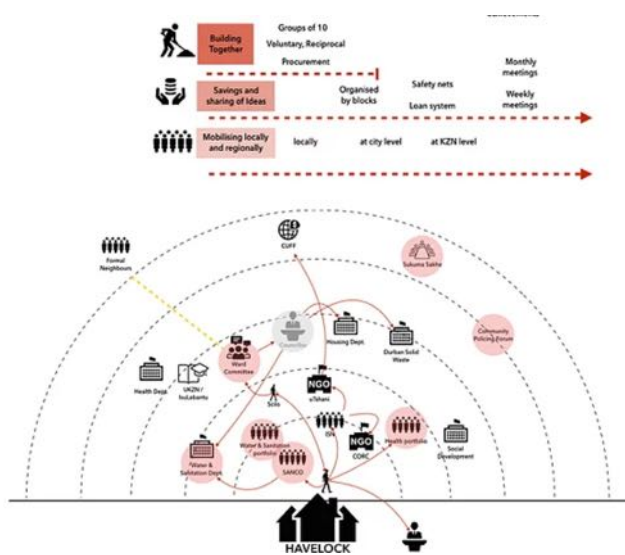
In October, Dr Claudia Loggia attended a GCRF Global Engagement Meeting in Bogota, continuing our close work with the fund.



During the workshop, Claudia had the opportunity to share her personal experience on ISULabaNtu and to discuss the practicalities of international collaborations and transdisciplinary projects.

Demystifying Qualitative Analysis

In May, Dr Isis Nunez Ferrera was at the University of Sheffield (UK), to share her approach to analysis and visualisation of qualitative data, as part of the Sheffield-Wits Newton Exchange Programme Colloquium on Demystifying Qualitative Analysis.



Phases 3 and 4 Fieldwork Kick-off

In May, Dr Christina Georgiadou and Dr Priti Parikh visited Durban to begin fieldwork for their work in Phase 3 (Integrated Closed Loop Environmental Management Systems) and Phase 4 (Project Management and Skills Enhancement in Construction), respectively.



They first provided training to community researchers from our three case studies, Namibia Stop 8, Piesang River and Havelock, on the research tools and instruments to be used. Next, they put the training into practice, holding focus groups, and transect walks in each community.

And finally...

In March, Dr Priti Parikh braved the standup comedy stage to share her work with a wider audience as part of the Science Showoff!



You can watch at goo.gl/3fyvAM



Plans for 2018...

Urban Transformations Workshop

We are delighted that Dr Christina Georgiadou and Dr Claudia Loggia have been invited to a workshop organised by the ESRC Urban Transformations Programme in Cape Town in January 2018, in collaboration with the African Cities Centre.



Christina and Claudia are looking forward to sharing our work in ISULabaNtu, and deepening connections to others in this funding portfolio.

ACC conference

We will be at the African Centre for Cities conference in February 2018 in Cape Town. Dr Christina Georgiadou, Dr Claudia Loggia and Judith Ojo-Aromokudu will present on our work.



Phase 5: Developing a Collaborative and Integrated Upgrading Toolkit – Kick off

In 2018, we will begin a series of internal and external stakeholder workshops with the support of our external Co-I Dr Grant Ballard Tremeer (EcoLtd) to develop a novel collaborative toolkit. The toolkit will address the roles of all direct beneficiaries in upgrades, including local communities, and the resources and skills needed during a community-led process.



More information at...


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