

SA Students: Slum Upgrade Fieldtrip

South African Cities Network. September 2012. The main theme of the Inclusive Cities programme revolves around whether residents have the opportunities and capacities to share equitably in the social benefits of city life. The programme objective is to enable cities to address the socio-economic challenges of South Africa's segregated cities.

SA Students take fieldtrip to Kenya to study comparative approaches to slum upgrade

"South African Cities Network contributed funding alongside the NRF and Wits University to support a group of Masters students' fieldtrip to Nairobi, Kenya in September 2012."

The group of 15 were students in the Wits Masters of the Built Environment in the field of Housing (MBE Housing) and some were in the MSc Development Planning taking housing electives. The selected students got to participate in various activities during the four-day trip to Nairobi:

Wednesday, 12-Sep-2012: Visits to Kibera settlement and Sanitary Facilities Project : Bio Center Innovations.

Thursday, 13-Sep-2012: Visits to Nachu (National Cooperative Housing Union) Office and UNHabitat.

Friday, 14-Sep-2012: Participation in "Re-Imagining Kenyan Urban Modernity: Symposium on the Slums Question in 21st Century," a conference on slum upgrading & prevention policy hosted by the University of Nairobi and Pamoja Trust at the United Kenya Club.

Saturday, 15-Sep-2012: Visits to Mathare Valley and Kambi Moto in Huruma.

In addition to the invaluable learning experiences of the fieldtrips, the participating students had the opportunity to present papers at the symposium alongside Kenyan academics, practitioners and civil society activists. They are now being expected to develop these papers further into publications.

Pedagogically, a visit to Nairobi seemed relevant from several perspectives. Nairobi, as the host of UN-Habitat, has been at the centre of third world housing debates in the literature since the 1980s.

Its government, similarly to that of South Africa, is developing 'slum' upgrading policy and gradually moving into implementation, while also striving for world class city infrastructure and facilities.

A robust debate exists on the relevance of different approaches to housing and informal settlement upgrading and the challenges in managing existing low income housing stock.

A first-hand experience of the 'slum' and housing environments and of the policy debates is an invaluable experience that will place this group of students in a better position to navigate the difficult world of housing/human settlements policy development in the countries in which they pursue their professional careers.

The fieldtrip was led by Professor Marie Huchzermeyer of the School of Architecture and Planning at the University of the Witwatersrand, and associated with the university's longstanding working relationship with the University of Nairobi's School of Architecture, Design and Development.

The following field-trip reports were produced:

[Perspective on Stormwater Drainage Issues in low-income human settlements](#) -

By Olumuyiwa B. Adegun

[Perspective on Diverging Approaches to Slum Upgrading](#) - By Lene Le Roux

[Perspective on Non-conventional Management Practices between Landlords and Tenants](#) - By Josephine Peace Enniful

[Slum upgrading initiatives and their impacts on livelihoods](#) - By Pumla Bafo

[Report on Conference on slum upgrading & prevention policy](#) - By Laura Burocco

[Report on Visits to Mathare Valley & Kambi Moto in Huruma](#) - By Laura Burocco

[Report on Nachu Office and UNHabitat Office](#) - By Laura Burocco