

BREAKING DOWN PROFESSIONAL SILOS: THE NEED TO IMPROVE COMMUNICATION BETWEEN PROFESSIONAL PLANNERS AND ENGINEERS

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ABSTRACT

For such a time as this; when cities and regions globally are faced with existential crises related to climate change, hyper-urbanisation, and growing sociospatial inequalities – disciplinary decadence, and silo mentalities cannot hold. If anything, collapsing disciplinary/professional boundaries must be a priority if we are to imagine and build stronger, resilient, just and liveable cities. The purpose of this discussion is to provide a new thinking frame about the built environment, focusing particularly on why and how all professionals within the built environment can think, and work in a transdisciplinary manner to best serve all communities. The recent calls for the decolonisation of the space in general, and the built environment in particular, compels planners, engineers and all professionals tasked with the ‘mission’ of reconstituting urban and rural spaces to work together. With South Africa, and Africa in mind, I propose the strengthening and capacitation of institutions such as the Council for the Built Environment for instance, to forge credible strategies and approaches that can allow for meaningful cross/multi-disciplinary dialogues within the built environment.