

Polytechnic and Finnish committed to alleviate poverty in Namibia

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A Finnish delegation of experts from various universities and municipalities who visited the campus this week, were pleased to affirm that the Polytechnic will continue to partner with them in their efforts to alleviate poverty in the Ondangwa and Keetmanshoop municipal areas through the North-South Partnership for Local Democracy, Development and Social Innovation (PLDDSI).

The six delegates, led by Timo Palander, Development Director at Lempaala Municipality in Finland, met with two Polytechnic Deans and Directors of Centres to discuss possible collaborations.

The visitors, as well as the President of the Finnish Veterinary Association, and officials from the Kangasala and Lempaala Municipalities are members of the forum.

PLDDSI has been involved in various projects in Ondangwa and Keetmanshoop aimed at accelerating social and economic development of the communities through inclusive and innovative governance. The Partnership has been engaged in projects such as mentoring the establishment of the Ondangwa abattoir and the improvement of waste management in the Ondangwa and Keetmanshoop municipalities. In these projects they have worked with Polytechnic staff as well as students studying Environmental Health Science and Civil Engineering.

The Finnish delegation briefed the Poly representatives on the progress of its North-South business partnerships such as the establishment of the Keetmanshoop Centre of Excellence for Processing of Semi-Precious Stones, the establishment of the Dorkambo



Members of the Finnish delegation are pictured with representatives of the Polytechnic. In front are: Finnish delegation leader, Timo Palander, and Dr. Zac Oyedokun, Dean of Engineering.

Weavery Exports in Keetmanshoop and the factory producing wheelchairs.

Commenting on the PLDDSI activities, Director of the Polytechnic's Centre for Entrepreneurial Development (CED), Margaret Bennett, said, "I am very happy and eager to collaborate with the team to establish businesses in Namibia." She said she was impressed by the innovative capabilities of the PLDDSI and emphasised that the CED is able to support concrete business efforts and to wean them from infancy.