

## **Professor Bill Lindeke (1946-2015) - A Tribute**

Institute for Public Policy Research (IPPR) Board member and Senior Research Associate Professor Bill Lindeke passed away on the afternoon of Thursday April 16 at his home in Windhoek. He had been seriously ill for several months having been diagnosed with cancer in 2013.

Today we are grieving the loss of a dearly cherished friend and colleague but we are also celebrating the many ways in which Bill enriched our lives. Bill was a gentle soul, a thoroughly good man, someone who offered his life to the pursuit of knowledge and supported others to hone their skills in that area. He believed in and nurtured young Namibians to become researchers of the highest calibre, to view the quest for understanding and truth, without fear or favour, as the primary value.

Bill had been a source of sage advice as an IPPR Board member for the best part of the last decade and a highly committed research associate who helmed the Afrobarometer project through the last three national surveys. As such, he was a well-known and respected figure in the international research community concerned with governance and democracy throughout the continent. Namibian and African scholarship is impoverished by his loss.

Bill was an insightful commentator on politics in Namibia and internationally - often going out of his way to help journalists with articles and provide 'instant' analysis for broadcast media. He saw the role of the academic as going far beyond the 'ivory towers' of higher education institutions and became a crucial resource person for civil society in Namibia.

Although very ill since late 2014, he had continued to coordinate the IPPR's Afrobarometer project and courageously managed to present survey findings at public events up until the end of February this year. Until just a few weeks ago he was still planning further Afrobarometer presentations at the University of Namibia and around the country.

He was a mentor for many young Namibians who studied political science and related subjects - both as a lecturer at the University of Namibia and as a source of advice and encouragement for individual students.

Bill joined the Board of the IPPR in 2007 and was the National Investigator for Rounds 4, 5 and 6 of the Afrobarometer public opinion survey in Namibia. He was a reliable and trusted source of wisdom, insight and humour for the research community at the IPPR. Over the past decade, Bill made an invaluable contribution to the development of the IPPR as the leading independent think tank in Namibia and a respected institution across Africa and internationally.

Bill had an extensive academic career - holding professorships in Political Science and Political Studies at the University of Namibia and University of Massachusetts Lowell (USA). He also taught at the Polytechnic of Namibia, Boston University Metropolitan College (USA),

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University of Portland (Oregon, USA), Oregon State University (Corvallis, USA), and University of California (Irvine, USA). He had over forty years of university level teaching at undergraduate and postgraduate levels.

He gained his Doctorate of Philosophy in Government at Claremont Graduate School in California in 1978 following the completion of a Masters Degree and a BA in Political Science at San Diego State College in 1970 and 1968 respectively.

He first taught at Unam in 1991-92 and returned to Namibia in 1999, initially as a senior lecturer at the Polytechnic of Namibia and from 2002 as a Professor of political science at Unam. After his retirement from Unam in 2006, he continued to assist students as an adjunct lecturer in political science at the institution.

Bill was an incisive political commentator often appearing on NBC TV programmes such as *Talk of the Nation* and regularly expressing his balanced and clear opinions on political developments in various print media.

Bill leaves a great legacy of reflective scholarship. Among the many publications he authored and edited were:

\* Historical Dictionary of Namibia. Co-authored with Victor Tonchi and John Grotpeter. Lanham, Maryland: Scarecrow Press, 2012.

\* “Participation” chapter in IDASA Democracy Index for Namibia. Johannesburg, South Africa: IDASA, 2012.

\* The Long Aftermath of War – Reconciliation and Transition in Namibia. Co-edited with André du Pisani and Reinhart Kössler. Freiburg: Arnold Bergstraesser Institut, 2010.

\* “Political Party Life in Namibia: Dominant Party with Consolidating Democracy”. Co-authored with André du Pisani. Book chapter Vol. IV, Kay Lawson Series Ed. Santa Barbara, California: Praeger Publishers, July 2010.

\* “Stuck in the Sand: Opposition Political Parties in Namibia”. Co-authored with André du Pisani. In Against All Odds. Democracy in Africa Series, Vol. 2. Ed. By Hussein Solomon. Sandton, South Africa: KMM Review Publishing, 2011.

\* “How are we Doing? Comparative Democratisation of Namibia and Her Peers”, book chapter, EISA, Annual Symposium Issue. 2008.

Published as “Comparative analysis of democratisation and development in developing countries: How does Namibia fare against her peers? In K. Matlosa et al., eds. The State, Democracy and Poverty Eradication in Africa. Johannesburg: EISA, 2009.

The IPPR sends its deepest condolences to his wife Tara, other family members, colleagues and friends.

*William Alfred Lindeke - May 13 1946 to April 16 2015*

Graham Hopwood  
IPPR Executive Director  
April 17 2015

Issued on behalf of the IPPR's Board of Directors and all IPPR Research Associates