CHAPTER 3

Inclusive Cities: Transversal Cooperation for Inclusion and Wellbeing

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INTRODUCTION

With more than half of the world's population now living in cities, urbanisation is a driving force of global development. When managed correctly, urbanisation creates opportunities for a better life, providing a pathway out of poverty and acting as an engine of economic growth. However, although urbanisation is driving global economic development, it is also accompanied by rising levels of inequality and exclusion within cities, which can hamper and obstruct development progress, especially in Africa.[1] Across the world, there is a shared vision that cities need to be inclusive and work to improve the wellbeing of citizens, so that all can reap the benefits of urbanisation. Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 11 calls for "inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable" cities,[2] while the World Bank places inclusion at the centre of its twin goals of ending extreme poverty and promoting shared prosperity.

In post-apartheid South Africa, inclusion is an important concept rooted in the need for transformation and redress. The country's Constitution is fundamentally redistributive, emancipatory and transformative, underpinned by the unlocking of rights and dignity. It lays "the foundations for a democratic and open society in which government is based on the will of the people", stating boldly that "South Africa belongs to all who live in it".[3] It tacitly recognises that how local government delivers its functions (e.g., human settlements, basic services, economic development) is based on dignity, belonging and affirming humanity and quality of life. For example, the right to adequate housing incorporates deeper elements of wellbeing, such as enjoying physical and mental health, and living in a safe place in peace and dignity.[4] South Africa's Integrated Urban Development Framework (IUDF) reaffirms these intentions, speaking about harnessing urban dynamism for inclusive, sustainable economic growth and development, and includes the goal of "Inclusion and access: To ensure people have access to social and economic services, opportunities and choices" (COGTA, 2016: 8).

Inclusivity and wellbeing in cities are crucial because within the next decade over 70% of South Africa's population will be living in urban areas. Inclusive development will happen in cities, which in practice means achieving spatial justice and a right to the city for all citizens, through the provision of basic services and infrastructure (e.g., housing, water and sanitation, electricity), sustainable urban management, employment and the necessary infrastructure to enhance and access economic opportunities, and participation and equal rights for all (SACN, 2016).[5] However, in 2018 over a quarter (26%) of South Africa's urban population lived in "slums",[6] and South African cities continue to be characterised by deep inequality, "class-based segregation" and "huge concentrations of poverty" (COGTA, 2016: 22).

1 https://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/inclusive-cities
2 https://sdgs.un.org/goals/goal11
3 Preamble of South Africa's Constitution (1996) https://www.gov.za/constitution
4 Nene-Khalema E., Verbal inputs at the ISOCARP International Symposium on Inclusive Cities, 28 – 30 June 2021
5 https://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/urbandevelopment/overview#1
6 https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/EN.POP.SLUM.UR.ZS?locations=ZA

South African cities have not made significant inroads into creating places and managing spaces that all people (particularly the marginalised) can identify with strongly – places and spaces that they can own and shape economically and socially, frequent freely and feel welcome in without fear of intimidation. This chapter attempts to describe some pockets of excellence that demonstrate how a more conducive and capable governance environment would shape the outcomes of cooperative governance. The emphasis is on devolving mandates and funding for crucial inclusion functions to the local level and how an all-of-society approach could help to make inputs/investments more sustainable and cities more inclusive. The case studies showing pockets of excellence demonstrate the effectiveness of partnerships in navigating devolved functions without the requisite resourcing. They suggest capability for positive impacts on inclusion and wellbeing rests not on the state doing it alone, but on its ability to partner effectively. In conclusion, the chapter offers some related lessons and recommendations.

THE RIGHT TO THE CITY

The New Urban Agenda (NUA) represents a paradigm shift in thinking about urban development. Adopted in 2016, the NUA "is intended to guide national and local policies on the growth and development of cities and human settlements" (DHS, 2018). At the heart of the NUA is the right to the city, which is defined as (UN-Habitat, 2017: 26):

> the right of all inhabitants present and future, to occupy, use and produce just, inclusive and sustainable cities, defined as a common good essential to the quality of life. The right to the city further implies responsibilities on governments and people to claim, defend, and promote this right.

Inclusion and wellbeing

Greater inclusion means improved quality of life or wellbeing of city dwellers. Quality of life encompasses a broad range of aspects, from culture and value systems to life goals and expectations, health and social relations (WHO, 1997). Inclusion can also be linked to the concept of care, which implies that citizens need a government that cares about their welfare. This concept draws attention to the object and mandate of local government in terms of people's rights to dignity, quality of life and economic inclusion.

Wellbeing is part of human development, which also includes various concerns about people's lives and their freedoms (Sen, 2000). It is multidimensional and requires effective cooperative governance, as various responsibilities are shared across different spheres of government. For example, housing is predominantly a national responsibility with some devolution to local government, while water and sanitation service delivery is a local function. Wellbeing also requires that individual and collective preferences are taken into account, as ignoring these leads to eroded dissatisfaction and trust in government and life in general, manifesting as a high incidence of service delivery protests.[7]

Inherent in bringing substance to democratic citizenship is the level of care by cities and an investment in all-of-society approaches. Spatial and social inclusion give way to "equity, justice, democratic governance, participation, social capital and quality of life".[8] If the dignity, justice, care and the quality of life of citizens matters, then so too does inclusion in space and involvement in civic and economic affairs.

7 In 2016/17, many community protests stemmed from lack of basic service delivery, corruption, unemployment and housing allocation (Right2Protest, 2017)
8 Pretorius O. Verbal inputs at the ISOCARP International Symposium on Inclusive Cities, 28–30 June 2021

Cooperative governance and the all-of-society approach

Building inclusive cities requires the whole of government and all of society. Cooperative governance is rooted in the Constitution and enhances the capacity of the state and its citizens to work together to achieve spatial, economic and social integration (COGTA, 2016). The importance of inclusionary, participatory practices in effective placed-based responses to urban challenges is highlighted in two of the IUDF's policy levers: 7. Empowered Active Communities and 8. Effective Urban Governance. Achieving these practices will require improving systems and institutional competency, and empowering citizens with knowledge of government structures and processes. Government needs to change how it communicates and engages with its citizens in order to demystify local government and improve participatory, co-creative governance. Better use of technology and digital platforms are some of the ways in which government can enable active democratic citizenship and empower communities to shape and contribute to developing spaces that will transform their quality of life. (ibid).

Municipalities may shoulder the greatest responsibility to govern because they are implementers of public policy, but they are supported by national and provincial governments (Coetzee, 2010). They are legally obliged to encourage participatory governance in development planning, which is defined as being committed to working with citizens and groups within the community to find sustainable ways to meet their social, economic and material needs and improve the quality of their lives (Basdeo, 2012). However, barring some instances of dynamic engagement, municipalities have not facilitated extensive, effective, meaningful and authentic engagements with citizens and communities. The lack of deep meaningful engagement and partnerships with communities to shape development is also echoed in Chapter 3: Spatially Trapped: Transforming the Rules of the Game. Although development and service delivery are central to how many services are provided (i.e., in terms of outputs), actual outcomes are barely considered or quantifiable at the city level. As a result of this disconnect between large-scale public investment and wellbeing outcomes, city programmes have perpetuated exclusion, resulting in more people becoming dissatisfied with government and services (GCRO, 2021).

Co-creation through cooperation and partnership, particularly with the marginalised, is fundamental to the emancipatory, transformative and redistributive underpinnings of policy, programmes and governance.

> Multiple experiences show that partnerships between local governments and organised community and citizens organisations based on high-quality, community-collected data produce development solutions that are more sustainable and affordable to the poorest – thereby creating more inclusive cities.[9]

Stakeholders need to change their mindset to one that understands the importance of working in partnership in order to address the multiple dimensions of poverty and improve quality of life in cities.

9 https://www.citiesalliance.org/newsroom/news/spotlight/why-we-need-inclusive-partnerships-new-urban-agenda

PROGRESS TOWARDS INCLUSIVE CITIES

South Africa remains one of the most unequal countries in the world, with a Gini coefficient of 0.63.[10] Income inequality is high and increasing: 10% of the population earn about 55–60% of all income and own 90–95% of all assets, while the poorest 50% earn about 10% of all income and own no measurable wealth at all.[11] Although non-monetary wellbeing has improved, for example through access to piped water, electricity and formal housing, and comprehensive social protection programmes are in place, the grants and pensions may reduce poverty but have minimal impact on wealth inequality (Leibbrandt et al., 2010; World Bank, 2018).

In South Africa, the face of poverty, inequality and exclusion is increasingly urban, despite metros reporting service levels of over 90% for water and electricity. Cities remain constrained in their ability to operationalise their functions in a developmental and transversal way, despite legislation requiring them "to put in place a range of strategic interventions, secure investment, encourage growth and deal with issues of social exclusion and poverty" (Nel & Binns, 2003).

Decades after the end of apartheid, many urban dwellers remain socially, spatially and economically excluded. The COVID-19 crisis has deepened inequality and mostly affected the marginalised, particularly black people, women, the youth and the 'forgotten agents': the people (e.g., security guards, homeless persons, informal workers) who enable cities to function smoothly but have limited choices for where they live and how they navigate cities (SACN–SACPLAN, 2019: 9). The reality of South African cities is that it is mostly the marginalised who "lead precarious lives on the margins", and those "born black, female, queer or disabled" find themselves at "the bottom of South Africa's barrel of inequity, with hardly any opportunity to jump the class hierarchy".[12]

Marginalised and vulnerable groups

Marginalised and vulnerable groups, including the youth, women and LBGTQI+ persons bear the brunt of poverty, inequality and exclusion, exacerbated by COVID-19, and experience limited participation in urban processes. Furthermore, city plans and programmes do not address the extent of exclusion facing these "othered" bodies (Seepie & Goba, forthcoming).

Almost two-fifths of South Africa's urban population is aged 15–35 years, and youth unemployment stands at 46.3% (Stats SA, 2021). They are disproportionately affected by multiple and intersecting exclusions and are most affected by violence and crime both as victims and perpetrators, with young men making up the majority of victims and perpetrators of crime.[13] Gender-based violence incidents have risen in their frequency and/or visibility over the years.

10 https://worldpopulationreview.com/country-rankings/gini-coefficient-by-country
11 http://theconversation.com/south-africa-needs-to-fix-its-dangerously-wide-wealth-gap-66355
12 https://www.newframe.com/historys-economic-imbalance-persists-in-sa/
13 https://www.saferspaces.org.za/understand/entry/youth-violence#YouthviolenceinSouthAfrica

Young people, individually or in organised/semi-organised structures, are actively involved in finding innovative solutions to problems in their communities and have a rich history of exercising their voice in discussions about education, climate change and politics. However, their participation in decision-making processes is limited, and they have few avenues through which to proffer ideas and to enable them to shape their own futures (SACN, forthcoming).

In South Africa, over two-fifths (41.8%) of households are female-headed (Stats SA, 2020). These households are "more likely to experience complete household non-employment" and have a higher incidence of poverty than male-headed households (Nwosu & Ndinda, 2018: 13). In many cases, women are responsible for multiple households and remit their earnings to other provinces. Women are also disproportionately affected by spatial inequality and inequitable economic participation, and shoulder more responsibility for unremunerated work, such as household tasks and care work, a situation exacerbated during COVID-19 (Deloitte, 2021). COVID-19 also amplified existing gender-based income inequalities.[14]

Furthermore, lack of safety and gender-based violence are more acutely felt in cities and towns, which are also where higher rates of crime occur (SACN, 2017; 2020a). Nine cities are home to about two-fifths of South Africa's population but account for 48% of murders, 84% of aggravated robberies and 76% of car hijackings (SACN, 2017). Women, girls and the LGBTQI+ community are especially vulnerable in public spaces and often limit their movement due to fear of crime (SACN, 2020b).

14 https://www.dailymaverick.co.za/article/2020-04-16-women-headed-households-and-covid-19/

POCKETS OF EXCELLENCE

Despite these challenges, cities contain pockets of excellence that demonstrate how transversal cooperation among government spheres and all-of-society approaches contribute to making cities more inclusive. "The spatial, social and economic dimensions of urban inclusion are tightly intertwined, and tend to reinforce each other" – the result is either to marginalise and keep people in poverty, or to improve lives and lift people from exclusion.[15] These examples of pockets of excellence reflect the interconnectedness of social, spatial and economic inclusion, with a particular emphasis on social inclusion.[16]

The social aspect of inclusion is based on equal rights and the participation of all, including the most marginalised. Therefore, the examples reflect citizen engagement through involving the youth in urban processes, working to make cities safer, improving living conditions in informal settlements, and creating better public places.

Empowering the youth: Metro Youth Strategies Project

The project's aim was to amplify the voice of youth and capacitate the youth to be empowered urban citizens and actors. The project, which was implemented by the SACN in partnership with the national Department of Cooperative Governance, ran from 2017 to 2020 and had two components:

- In 2018 and 2020, the Young Planners and Designers Competition invited young urban scholars and professionals to share their perspectives on local governance and visions of the futures of their cities. The 2020 entrants considered how to lay the foundations for more inclusive cities in a world changed by the pandemic. Topics included: the apartheid-esque management of public spaces; the relegation of 'forgotten agents' (e.g., car guards, domestic workers) to the fringes of urban society; the need for modern, adaptable townships that support informal livelihood strategies through inclusive spatial design and technology; creative ways of enhancing civic participation; planning systems and institutional cultures that remain inherently elitist; and resource-intensive development that perpetuates gatekeeping around who benefits from living in cities.
- The Youth and City Space component engaged youth from non-planning backgrounds involved in community organising or youth structures, with the aim of demystifying urban institutions and processes. Participants learned about key processes, such as integrated development plans (IDPs) and how to navigate municipal spaces. They also undertook participatory action research to identify challenges, map community assets and partnerships, and devise solutions in an evidence-based way.

The project revealed that young people, both individually and in organised/semi-organised structures, are actively involved in innovation and finding solutions to problems in their communities. However, their experience is that intersecting hierarchies exclude them from playing a meaningful role in shaping their own communities and futures. Too often their ideas and contributions fall on deaf ears and, in many cases, they simply do not know which channels to follow to report or address problems.

15 https://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/inclusive-cities
16 For more on the spatial and economic aspects of inclusion, see [Spatial Transformation chapter] and [Productive Cities chapter] respectively.

A common view expressed was "[i]t hurts me to know that I know young people that could do something for the community at large but are not given the chance because they don't have connections".[17] This is in part because of the lack of awareness and visibility of youth empowerment initiatives in cities. It also speaks to the challenges that local government face in formalising partnerships and distributing resources to community actors for much-needed community initiatives. Furthermore, where city youth structures do exist, they are seen as generally event-based and ineffective in challenging the status quo of poor youth engagement and democratic participation, thus reinforcing the point made about the current state, depth and quality of community engagement. Even though local government is closest to communities (an anchor point), all indications suggest that this positioning requires further capacitation and resourcing.

WORKING TO MAKE CITIES SAFER: THE URBAN SAFETY REFERENCE GROUP

The SACN's Urban Safety Reference Group (USRG) brings together city practitioners and their national counterparts, to advocate collectively and grow consciousness about the transversal/multidisciplinary inputs needed to make cities safer, moving beyond policing or law enforcement. Addressing the problems of crime and violence, particularly as they affect a city's developmental capacity to transform space and lives, requires the input of most city functions, not just community/public safety units. Planning, transport, human settlements, public space, economic and community development functions, among others, all contribute to creating safe cities that can achieve their developmental agenda. Collaborative approaches are emerging, in spite of an institutional set-up that does not support the required cross-departmental collaboration,[18] the ongoing challenges of alignment between policy and practice, siloed implementation, and widespread state capacity challenges (SACN, 2019).

- eThekwini Municipality's Safer Cities unit[19] has made significant strides in educating other line departments about their role in transversal approaches to safety planning and governance, and advocating the streamlining and institutionalisation of safety as multidisciplinary and transversal. Through a programme endorsed by the African Forum for Urban Safety (AFUS), eThekwini implemented various offerings including an accredited masterclass, inviting all line departments in the city to increase their understanding and contribution. It has brought sector functions, such as human settlements, horticulture, architecture, and social development, to the table to learn how they can contribute to co-producing a safer city.
- The City of Joburg, through a programme of learning and exchange on the topic of public space with eThekwini Municipality, initiated the Park Activation Coordinators Training Programme, which capacitates and trains Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) participants in both cities to be park activators (facilitating sports programmes among other activities) and to conduct city safety audits (GIZ-VCP & VPUU NPC, 2020).

These interventions aimed at making cities safer have taken place in pockets, through the efforts of active champions and with the support of a community of practice that has over the years shifted their collective understanding of urban safety to one which is transversal and a developmental issue. They work across silos and partner within an institutional environment that recognises the value of transversality but is seemingly not yet able to iron out the barriers to integration. Metro police departments remain confined to traffic, with limited scope to do crime prevention, while municipal and police precinct boundaries remain misaligned. Such issues of demarcations have material impacts on violence and crime reduction.

There is a need for capacity, innovation, adaptation and resourcing for institutional uptake of learning. In addition, the institutional positioning of mandates needs to be considered in discussions about effective devolution. Despite the best practices generated through ad-hoc partnerships, to upscale these practices requires the department with whom the safety function sits having the institutional power to compel others to participate – this is not the case in most instances.

17 Interview with a young person (2019)
18 The design of individual and departmental performance indicators and budgets makes justifying the sharing of human and financial resources across functions difficult.
19 http://www.durban.gov.za/City_Government/safer_cities/Pages/default.aspx

Giving a voice to people living in informal settlements: Asivikelane

Space determines people's quality of life, wellbeing and life chances, especially in South Africa where an historically distorted spatial planning legacy impedes the creation of inclusive cities. Apartheid's socially engineered imbalance and spatial inequalites continue to this day and have been compounded by the influx of people seeking opportunities and the benefits of city life.

Government housing programmes have not addressed the persistent apartheid spatial segregation that defines the South African urban landscape. Millions of people live in poor housing conditions, often located on the periphery of cities in informal settlements, backyard shacks in townships, overcrowded family homes or dilapidated inner city buildings. These living circumstances are informal and lack access to decent basic services (water, sanitation, electricity, solid waste removal, storm water drainage, etc.). The human settlements sector is characterised by a lack of alignment among the three spheres of government, with the partial devolution of housing functions to the local level, and other role players such as the Housing Development Agency (HDA) and Social Housing Regulatory Authority (SHRA). Despite the need for intergovernmental collaboration and coordination to deliver programmes, in particular the Upgrading of Informal Settlements Programme (UISP) and the Social Housing Programme, there is currently a lack of alignment between municipal and provincial housing plans. The growing backlog and slow pace of delivery have led to increased protests and litigation around human settlements.

The COVID-19 crisis highlighted the importance of partnering with civil society organisations and communities, which is something that the Advisory Panel on Land Reform and Agriculture (2019: 90) recommended, stating that municipalities should be supported "to work in inclusive and democratic ways with social movements and organisations of the landless, homeless, backyard and shack dwellers".

One such initiative is Asivikelane[20] ("Let's protect each other"), which was started in 2020 by the International Budget Partnership South Africa (IBPSA) in collaboration with a number of partners. Its aim is to amplify the voices of informal settlement residents in South Africa's major cities who faced severe basic service shortages during the COVID-19 crisis. The initiative has grown and currently has 15 non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and community-based organisations (CBOs) as members,[21] working with Asivikelane across seven metros: Buffalo City, Cape Town, Ekurhuleni, eThekwini, Johannesburg, Nelson Mandela Bay and Tshwane.

The campaign seeks to develop partnerships with metros for monitoring and improving service provision in informal settlements, in order to improve wellbeing outcomes for residents overall.[22] The model promotes inclusion and is used in many metros. It offers a way to bridge the gap between the municipality and residents around service provision in informal settlements. Evidence, data and monitoring of service provision are all crucial elements. Residents of informal settlements answer three questions about their access to water (taps), clean toilets and waste removal, and the results are published bi-weekly and shared with the relevant local government actors.

20 https://asivikelane.org/
21 The organisations involved include Abahlali baseMjondolo (AbM), Afesis-corplan Development Action Group (DAG), Planact, South African Shack Dwellers International Alliance (SASDIA), Social Justice Coalition (SJC) and 1:1 Agency of Engagement. Many of the organisations that are part of the initiative also push for incremental participatory and informal settlement upgrading as a key focus of metros.
22 See https://www.internationalbudget.org/covid-monitoring/

IN MAY 2021, RESPONSES WERE OBTAINED FROM:[23]

17 settlements and
182 residents in
BUFFALO CITY

47 settlements and
141 residents in
CAPE TOWN

28 settlements and
160 residents in
EKURHULENI

44 settlements and
167 residents in
ETHEKWINI

36 settlements and
220 residents in
JOHANNESBURG

19 settlements and
175 residents in
NELSON MANDELA BAY

5 settlements and
31 residents in
TSHWANE

23 See https://asivikelane.org/summaries-for-municipalities-asivikelane-17/

Over the past year, evidence collected by Asivikelane shows that broken taps and blocked or broken toilets are common in informal settlements, and metros are generally slow to repair these. As a result, residents are left with fewer working taps and toilets, or in some cases with none. Although most metros indicate that maintenance and repairs of basic services infrastructure is a 'priority', lessons from the initiative identified challenges around budgeting for maintenance.

SCALING UP INFORMAL SETTLEMENT UPGRADING

Another initiative to emerge as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic was the push to rapidly scale-up of informal settlement upgrading. In 2020, a range of stakeholders participated in the development of a partnership framework agreement between civil society organisations (CSOs) and the Department of Human Settlements (DHS) around interventions in informal settlements.

The pandemic exposed "the severity of living conditions in informal settlements, which have always threatened the health, dignity and safety of people living there, [and…] present an imminent life and death situation". The following risk factors were identified: access to basic services, adequate shelter, economic activity, education and information sharing, and social safety nets.[24] The results demonstrate the need to work across sectors to urgently meet the needs of very vulnerable populations and to ensure that "economic levers are used collaboratively to create pathways for inclusion", as Chapter 2: Productive Cities discusses. This means rethinking the economy and opening opportunities especially for the informal sector. Although the partnership framework agreement is not yet implemented, its aim is to strengthen local partnership agreements between stakeholders around informal settlement upgrading in metros, at both a programmatic and project level. The process highlights the need for municipal departments, residents, community groups, national government and other entities to work together, as collaboration remains the key to successful improvement of the lives of people in informal settlements and integrating them into the broader fabric of cities.

24 Partnership Framework Agreement between Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) and the National Department of Human Settlements (NDHS) around interventions in informal settlements in the context of COVID-19 (8 June 2020)

Working together to create better public spaces and places

The COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated service delivery, economic and housing challenges, and highlighted the importance of public spaces for public health and safety, especially among marginalised communities. At the same time, the response to the pandemic has demonstrated the resilience and innovation that exist in the non-government sector, including communities. There is an urgent need to find solutions to the persistent inequalities and creative ways of developing and managing public spaces (SACN, 2020b). The key is community ownership and true participation, which means including communities and other stakeholders from the outset, i.e., at the design stage.

The Congella Park project in eThekwini (eThekwini PRC, n.d.) and the Gilfillan Park project[25] in Johannesburg are examples of successful inclusive public place-making, illustrating the importance of collaboration for regenerating inner cities, supporting livelihoods and improving community wellbeing.

Congella Park

Like many cities in the world, Durban faces the broad social problem of homelessness. In February 2016, a census found that "close to 4000 people are living on the streets or in the formal shelters of Durban", of which about half live in public spaces, including parks (Desmond et al., 2016: 2). The municipality has implemented various programmatic responses to address the challenge of homelessness, despite not having a specific homeless policy in place.

The case of Congella Park illustrates the power of a champion and the success of a 'social management' model for parks, which was informed by previous interventions in the city. The project indicates that whole-of-government and all-of-society partnering could lead to new social management models and a new social vision of public space.

Over the years, Congella Park had become an uninviting physical space that was no longer used by the local community. Once one of Durban's most well-landscaped parks, the large 3.6-hectare park in the Congella industrial area located southwest of the Durban inner city faced challenges including rising crime and public safety concerns in the area, littering, illegal dumping, 'vandalism' (such as use of trees for firewood), drug abuse and homeless occupation of the park. To revitalise the park and improve accessibility and public use, the municipality adopted a strategy regarding homelessness similar to the one adopted in Albert Park SEE BOX.

QALAKABUSHA INTERVENTIONS IN ALBERT PARK

In 2013/14, eThekwini Municipality launched its Clean My City Programme, "in response to the social ills and service delivery problems identified in certain parts of the City".[26] It is aligned to eThekwini's vision of being Africa's most caring and liveable city by 2030 and includes clean-up operations, bylaw enforcement and education aimed at changing people's attitudes. Part of this programme is the Qalakabusha Intervention Programme, a pilot project involving many stakeholders, from NGOs to private sector and provincial and local government (Nzimande & Fabula, 2020). The aim was to make Albert Park safer, cleaner and more attractive, and included moving a large group of homeless men from the park to a more suitable area about 500 metres from the park (ibid). The Qalakabusha Programme was innovative because it sought to address both social problems (homelessness) and the sustainable management of the park.

25 https://www.kwpcreate.com/post/3617/gilfillanpark/
26 http://www.durban.gov.za/Resource_Centre/Press_Releases/Pages/EThekwini-to-unveil-full-scale-City-wide-clean-up-campaign.aspx

Since 2016, Jennifer Rampersad, a horticulturist with the eThekwini Parks, Recreation and Culture (PRC) department had been working on upgrading and improving Congella Park, including pruning trees and other vegetation.[27] By 2017, after numerous clean-ups, law enforcement patrolling and regular monitoring of the park, most of the homeless had left the park. Just 12 homeless people remained and refused to move. An extensive consultation process followed, between local government departments, civil society and faith-based organisations, the local business community, and the homeless residents of the park.

The Umbilo Business Forum (UBF), a voluntary membership and non-profit organisation of local businesses based in Sydney Road, where the park is located, had already donated tents for the homeless in the park in 2016, and backed and supported Rampersad's development of an urban park social model that could accommodate the needs of all stakeholders (Rampersad, n.d.). With a limited budget and limited staff, other organisations were approached for assistance where necessary. Social workers from non-profit organisations I-care and the Dennis Hurley Centre (who were also involved with the earlier project at Albert Park) looked after the general needs of the homeless, offered counselling services and acted as interpreters since some of the homeless did not speak English well. Durban Solid Waste (DSW) kept the area clean, while a nearby hospital tended to the sick, and local businesses provided trucks to assist with the clean-ups.

STAKEHOLDERS INVOLVED IN CONGELLA PARK INITIATIVE

- The homeless residents of the park
- Government departments: PRC, DSW, Metro Police and the Safer Cities Unit, the South African Police Services (SAPS), Health, Social Development, Home Affairs and Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs
- Civil society and non-profit organisations: Kenneth Gardens Youth, Dennis Hurley Centre, I-care, Diakonia Council of Churches
- The UBF and other private sector role players, including park users

What emerged was an alternative, socially orientated management model, which appointed the remaining 12 homeless people as the park's resident caretakers and operators, after they had undergone training in maintaining and securing the park. The process has three phases:

- Phase 1 (completed): Education and awareness: This included helping homeless people with drug and health issues, facilitating access to shelters in the city centre and providing training in how to keep the park clean and tidy.
- Phase 2 (completed): Implementation: This included establishing and monitoring a food garden, a recycling station, and a pay toilet facility, as well as landscaping and additional flower beds. The homeless people participated in workshops that trained them in running a food garden, which now supplies restaurants in nearby Glenwood. Many of the homeless were already engaged in recycling and participated in a five-day workshop on managing and generating an income from recycling. A recycling station operated by the homeless residents was also established, working in close collaboration with municipal staff.
- Phase 3 (current): Management and sustainability: This involves local stakeholders through collaboration between PRC, local businesses (e.g., UBF), communities, churches and the selected interested local homeless people who are receiving park training work in close collaboration with municipal staff.

27 Interview with J Rampersad, horticulturalist, Durban Botanic Gardens, eThekwini Municipality, 29 May 2021

Food garden produce supplied to local restaurants (eThekwini PRC)

The alternative model is an example of new thinking in public space management and underscores the importance of collaboration and partnering. The wellbeing benefits include:

- Addressing social ills, by managing homelessness in the park.
- Improving waste management, through regularising recycling, thereby addressing a source of extreme frustration for local businesses.
- Creating a place of peace and recreation that is enjoyed and frequented by local residents and users
- Providing livelihoods to the homeless, most of whom now have a bank card and are generating more income (R1,000/week, compared to about R350/week previously).The UBF manages their funds and offers supervision, and continues to pay wages for the management, permaculture and recycling programmes.

Congella Park also appears to have had a broader impact. During the COVID-19 Level 5 lockdown, eThekwini Municipality set up 11 temporary homeless shelters that housed about 2500 people. One year later, by March 2021, the municipality had reduced the number of temporary shelters to four, housing just under 560 people.[28] At least three of these have started their own gardens to grow vegetables for market. The municipality's Safer Cities Unit facilitated the programme, partnering with non-governmental, faith-based and civil society organisations, while private sector companies also provided agricultural expertise.

28 Harper P. 'A year into Covid, Durban's beachfront farmers are still tilling the soil.' Mail and Guardian, 27 March 2021 https://mg.co.za/news/2021-03-27-a-year-into-covid-durbans-beachfront-farmers-are-still-tilling-the-soil/

Jeppe Park

GILFILLAN PARK, JEPPESTOWN, JOHANNESBURG

Source: Gilfillan Park, Johannesburg

Gilfillan Park (commonly known as Jeppe Park) is a 11 000m² area located in the inner-city neighbourhood of Jeppestown, Johannesburg. The park consisted of basic, neglected lawned areas and a strip of paving around the perimeter, with mostly exotic trees providing shade. It was ill-equipped and did not have the basic facilities required for its large number of users. In 2017, the Johannesburg Development Agency (JDA), together with Johannesburg City Parks and Zoo (JCPZ), began the park's upgrade, which was completed in June 2018 at a cost of R15-million. The upgrade was one of the many projects identifed in the "Inner City Eastern Gateway Urban Development Framework and Implementation Report", a city spatial policy prepared by Osmond Lange Architects & Planners for the City of Johannesburg and JDA (CoJ & JDP, 2016). The final brief supplied by the JDA was to transform the site into a functional park without restricting any of the multiple and positive on-site activities already taking place, as revealed during the community engagement process. The upgraded and re-designed park would serve residents in Jeppestown and the surrounding areas of City and Suburban and Troyeville.

In 2016, prior to implementation, JCPZ commissioned the Bjala Foundation, a Jeppestown-based social development enterprise, to conduct a local community consultation study (Bjala Foundation, 2016). Bjala employed several tools to determine and understand the community's norms and rules, likes/dislikes, needs and wishes, as well as basic spatial considerations. The study identified five main park user groups and activities, which were incorporated into the design and implementation phases, and included community feedback. The five main park user groups identified were: Streetlight Schools – Jeppe Park Primary, located three metres from the park; Shembe Church; Ingoma traditional dancing; The Soccer Guys; and different *imihlangano* (community meetings). Other important stakeholders identified were: people in transit (passing through the park on their way home), local residents, the Nationwide Primary School (located 40 metres from the park), the Bjala Early Childhood Development (ECD) centre (located three metres from the Park) and the Bjala Foundation itself.

Some of the activites identified included:

- Physical education classes for primary school learners.
- Supervised play for children from the neighbouring ECD centre.
- Community meetings.
- Health promotion (the Department of Health's circumcision van is positioned in the park on a regular basis).
- Information sharing and public notices, provided by the Jeppestown Building Information Forum, which is the custodian of a community noticeboard that contains information about building ownership and land use change (an initiative aimed at protecting housing rights), as well as general public notices.

The park was upgraded and re-designed in consultation with local residents through an extensive stakeholder engagement that enabled the community to give inputs into the final design. As a result, further objectives for the park emerged that went beyond the initial plan to develop a functional, multi-purpose public space amidst the dense streets, office blocks, apartments and schools surrounding the site. These included skills development and job creation during the construction phase of the project, with 30% of the contract value being awarded to small, medium and micro enterprises (SMMEs) in the local ward. The contractor used five SMMEs and 39 local labourers for the construction work, which included employing and training small landscape and horticultural enterprises involved in work such as paving, brickwork, street furniture and planting.

The process created a sense of community ownership and anticipation, so much so that children were excitedly trying to access the play areas even before completion. Today, the park is used extensively and vandalism has decreased. The project showed the benefits of a collaborative approach, which was recognised when the design of Gilfillan Park received a commendation for excellence in urban design at the Institute for Landscape Architects for South Africa (ILASA) awards in 2019.

MAKING CITIES MORE INCLUSIVE

The role of the state and city authorities in promoting inclusion is not merely technical or procedural but is underpinned by an explicit agenda of safeguarding human rights and dignity, rooted in the Constitution. Unfortunately, the reality is that public investment decisions "are largely made in disciplinary silos which often barely communicate with each other; and engineering concerns dominate over human and environmental ones – our cities are over-simplified technical 'solutions' to highly complex human processes".[29] However, the pockets of excellence have demonstrated what is possible and highlighted elements that are necessary to achieve real engagement for inclusion and wellbeing.

Community involvement makes the difference

Participation is people empowerment, a vehicle for social change and sustainable public investments. When participation is linked to access to the commons or public goods, it significantly enables the right to the city, uplifts and upskills, stimulates active citizenship, sustains service delivery, and contributes to positive community perceptions and public trust in institutions (SACN, 2021).

The case study on human settlements shows the importance of metros working in partnership with CSOs and communities to ensure informal settlements receive basic services and are upgraded incrementally. This involves developing multi-stakeholder, multi-sector local teams that can address issues impeding the wellbeing of some of the most vulnerable residents in the city. The Asivikelane initiative shows that such collaborations are possible, but implementation requires political will from metros.

29 https://www.dailymaverick.co.za/article/2019-07-16-the-smart-solution-is-to-fix-our-ailing-cities/

Local ownership is the primary and essential benefit of extensive participation and cooperative governance. In Congella Park, the inclusion of homeless individuals, as the park's caretakers, guardians and operators, addressed both welfare and community safety issues, while in Gilfillan Park, the all-of-society approach led to the identification of multiple existing usages, which had not been included in the original plan, and to the local community taking ownership of their park. The result was a decrease in vandalism and an increase in park usage. The Gilfillan Park consultation process further benefited from being undertaken by a local stakeholder, the Bjala Foundation, that was invested in the project and in community engagement.

Integrators or champions play a crucial role

More integrators or champions are needed within local government. These are "people who can work beyond the confines of their line departments and develop good relationships with other sector departments within the municipality and other spheres of government" (SACN, 2015: 79). For instance, prior to its partnership with JCPZ/JDA, Bjala had only a few years earlier not wished to proceed with such a partnership for the Gilfillan Park upgrade because the city approach was believed to be too top-down.[30]

Champions can show what is possible beyond the conventional. In Congella Park, the champion drew from precedents but also developed innovative in-situ responses, while Gilfillan Park demonstrated that community-engagement champions within the city and among local stakeholders can play a key role in the ultimate success of the project.

The style of engagement that is adopted in any setting will depend on the capacities and resources of the practitioner leading the engagement process, as well as community dynamics, budgets and organisational culture in the municipality. Practitioners will find it more difficult to invest in relationships that could deliver true collaboration if they are fearful of community responses or punitive responses inside their institution. Therefore, the ability of practitioners to achieve true collaboration depends on their ability to acknowledge and manage their own feelings of fear, scarcity, resilience, courage and creativity, and on the support they receive within typically hierarchical state institutions (SACN, 2021).

Working to attain inclusion has multiplier effects

Inputs made towards a certain goal can result in broader outputs and outcomes than originally intended. For example, conceiving, developing and managing parks in an 'urban cluster' enables certain resources to be shared in creating an urban environment. Safety can be improved in cooperation with local stakeholders, by identifying key targeted areas between parks (e.g., along sightlines) for upgrading though small-scale interventions, such as installing lighting and WiFi. In so doing, a safety network is created in the immediate environment of inner city parks. Capital (re)development should be undertaken in tandem with other strategies, to create complementary, integrated and responsive interventions, and to maximise the use of resources.

30 Interview with N Pingo, Development Facilitation Manager, Johannesburg Development Agency, 30 May 2021

Both Gilfillan Park and Congella have extended the meaning of 'inclusion', to include addressing social needs and social development, in both process and management. The parks have become more than recreational and leisure places; they have become healthy public spaces that have improved community and societal wellbeing. The scope of what can be conceived and accomplished is likely to be widened through deepened local stakeholder engagement. Conceiving parks in a collaborative way is ultimately tied to public space and place-making defined in an African context, which emergent projects such as the Centre on African Spaces will be addressing.[31]

Transversal management and intergovernmental relations are needed

The lack of alignment between functions, responsibilities and funded mandates has a detrimental impact on the wellbeing of individuals. As the Asivikelane initative found, metros are generally slow to repair the broken taps and blocked toilets that are so common in informal settlements, resulting in residents being left with fewer working taps and toilets or, in some cases, with none. Responsibility for the maintenance of public infrustructure in informal settlements is usually vested in municipalities. However, issues of informal settlement upgrading, relocations (where unavoidable), allocation of land, funding for serviced sites and top structures, and programmes (such as Finance Linked Individual Subsidy Programme, FLISP, and social housing) are dispersed among provincial and national government as well as agencies. This creates a challenge in planning for longer-term improvements and formalisation within informal settlements. The need for transversal management and improved intergovernmental relations has been an important focus of the USRG, as the mainstreaming of planning, implementation and operations among a range of actors from different state and non-state organisations is crucial for improving safety in urban areas.

31 https://www.urbanet.info/towards-pan-african-spaces-of-public/

CONCLUSION

When managed correctly, urbanisation is a driving force of development but may also result in rising levels of inequality and exclusion. Inclusion is rooted in the need for transformation and spatial justice. The right to the city for all citizens and greater inclusion mean improved quality of life or wellbeing of citizens. South African cities remain spaces in which marginalised and vulnerable groups bear the brunt of poverty, inequality and exclusion, exacerbated by COVID-19. Nevertheless, pockets of excellence demonstrate how cities can become more inclusive through effective cooperative governance and an all-of-society approach. This includes engaging citizens in work to make cities safer, involving the youth in urban processes, improving living conditions in informal settlements and creating better public places. These examples show the importance of community ownership and participation, and the crucial role played by integrators or champions, as well as the multiplier effects of working towards inclusion.

The governance and operations of government must be emancipatory and redistributive in their essence, as underpinned by the Constitution. Local government's objective should not be merely procedural but must confront inequality and the spatial, economic and social drivers that constrain wellbeing. This will require addressing the design of urban and governance systems, not continuing with futile efforts that only skim the surface of power and politics. Existing systems have been designed for extraction, to benefit elites, and the relegation of the poor and historically marginalised to the fringes of South African cities. To give effect to rights and dignity will require shifting the foundations of urban institutions, systems, processes and stakeholders.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The multidimensional nature of inclusion and wellbeing demands effective cooperative governance and an all-of-society approach. Although cities have pockets of excellence, the challenge is upscaling and institutionalising them in order to yield sustainable inclusion and wellbeing outcomes for city dwellers.

Co-create with communities

The systems, processes and practices of public institutions must become people-centred and inclusive, so that all reap the benefits of living in cities. Co-creation through cooperation and partnership will have to become the order of the day, as opposed to rewarding individual achievement or siloed approaches. This is not easy but is essential to the sustainability of public investments and offers an opportunity for municipalities to connect with communities. These benefits will always outweigh the challenges.

Local stakeholders must be consulted and research done *prior* to the implementation of a project, in order to understand the needs of the surrounding area and communities. This will lead to sustainable and impactful programmes because they will be based on inputs from communities who understand their context better than anyone else. When community voices are not heard and projects do not reflect their needs, it reinforces historical exclusion and 'un-belonging'. The result is often communities that do not value, vandalise or ignore projects, culminating in a worsening relationship with the municipality.

Upskill city practitioners

Practioners need to be equipped and skills transferred, to ensure continuity and the retention of institutional memory. Many practical tools and techniques exist (e.g., implementation and management models, and visioning tools) that officials could use to involve a cross-section of stakeholders, including partners, intermediaries, users and beneficiaries. Practitioners need to be capacitated to engage with complexity and work effectively horizontally and vertically within their own institutions and across spheres of government. They need to be able to facilitate effective community engagements and empower vulnerable groups, such as the youth, to amplify their voices and be part of decision-making processes. When practitioners find ways to share power, there is an opportunity to innovate and solve some of the most complex social problems through diverse inputs and shared effort and accountability. Practitioners should participate in learning and exchange platforms for professionals that breach the confines of their institutions and stakeholder groups. These platforms provide them with:

- An opportunity to share their experiences and practices, inform the practice of others and learn from others to improve their own practice.
- Spaces (perhaps not otherwise available) to engage with other professionals in developing solutions to problems and creating new ways of improving projects and practices.
- Psycho-social support.

Institutionalise good practices

Good practices tend to be at the level of loosely formed coalitions of the willing, rather than institutionalised, which limits the ability to upscale them. Highly capacitated, knowledgeable and skilled practitioners show what is possible beyond the conventional, and demonstrate that the necessary tools, knowledge and materials are available. However, such efforts are neither replicable nor sustainable unless the systems and resources are in place to support them, and the lessons are learned and expanded upon systematically. What is needed is to encourage, facilitate and incentivise a collaborative culture through multiple and deliberate mechanisms. Such institutional activism provides continuity across projects to ensure that the various sector departments have a clear sense of their roles and input. This may require finding an institutional home for the project. Shifting institutional culture is hard and will require high-level political support in order to secure the capacities and finances necessary to drive the desired practices and outcomes.