

'No Messing in Bonteheuwel': The role of social capital and partnership building in sustainable community development

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Abstract

This article focuses on a community-development programme (case study) in Bonteheuwel on the Cape Flats, viz. 'No Messing in Bonteheuwel'. In a period of just over a decade, this community has transitioned from a degraded natural, built and social environment to one where the community have cohered to realise a vision of a place of which they are currently proud. This case study adds to the understanding of sustainable community development, by tracing the transition from a vicious to a virtuous cycle of community development. The development of social capital within the community, coupled with the development of partnerships and the building of trust with local government, have been identified as key ingredients in this transition. The benefits derived from the current virtuous cycle for the Bonteheuwel community as well as local government are demonstrated. This article contributes towards the understanding of how to foster sustainable communities, and is, therefore, of relevance to local governments and policy-makers.

'NO MESSING IN BONTEHEUWEL': DIE ROL VAN MAATSKAPLIKE KAPITAAL EN VENNOOTSKAPSBOU IN VOLHOUBARE GEMEENSKAPSONTWIKKELING

Hierdie artikel, 'No Messing in Bonteheuwel', fokus op 'n gemeenskapsontwikkelingsprogram (gevallestudie) by Bonteheuwel op die Kaapse Vlakte. In net meer as 'n dekade het daar 'n oorgang in hierdie gemeenskap plaasgevind van 'n afgeleefde natuurlike, beboude en maatskaplike omgewing na 'n gemeenskap wat verenig is om 'n visie te verwerklik om 'n plek te skep waarop die mense trots kan wees. Hierdie gevallestudie dra by tot die begrip van volhoubare gemeenskapsontwikkeling deur die oorgang van 'n skadelike na 'n goeie kringloop in gemeenskapsontwikkeling by Bonteheuwel na te speur. Die ontwikkeling van maatskaplike kapitaal in die gemeenskap, tesame met die ontwikkeling van vennootskappe en die bou van 'n vertrouensverhouding met die plaaslike regering, is as die sleutelemente van hierdie oorgang geïdentifiseer. Die voordele wat uit die huidige goeie kringloop vir beide die gemeenskap van Bonteheuwel en vir die plaaslike regering spruit, word aangedui. Hierdie artikel dra by tot die begrip van hoe om die ontwikkeling van volhoubare gemeenskappe te bevorder en daarom is dit vir plaaslike regerings en vir beleidmakers van belang.

'NO MESSING IN BONTEHEUWEL': INDIMA YEZIMALI EZINKULU ZENTLALO NOKWAKHIWA KOBUHLAKANI KUPHUHLISO OLULUQILIMA LOLUNTU

Eli phepha elithi, 'No Messing in Bonteheuwel', lijoliswe kwiprogramu yokuphuhlisa uluntu lwaseBonteheuwel kwiiCape Flats. Kwisithuba nje seminyaka elishumi, aba bahlali baye batshintsha ukusuka ekubeni yindawo ewohlokileyo ngokwendalo, izakhiwo nakwintlalo yaba luluntu olumanyeneyo ekudaleni indawo olunokuzidla ngayo. Olu phando longeza kwindlela esiluoqonda ngayo uphuhliso loluntu oluqhubekayo ngokuphanda ngokuphucuka kophuhliso loluntu lwaseBonteheuwel lusuka kokungento lwaza lwenza inkqubela. Ukuphuhlisa kwekhepatali yentlalo kule ndawo, kunye nokuphuhlisa kwentsebenziswano nokuthembana norhulumente wengingqi, kuye kwaye kwachazwa njengondoqo kolu tshintsho. Iinzuzo ezifunyenwe kule nkqubela kokubini kuluntu lwaseBonteheuwel nakurhulumente wengingqi ziyabonakala. Eli phepha linegalelo ekuqondeni kwethu indlela yokuqhuba uphuhliso kwiindawo ezinenkqubela kwaye, ngenxa yoko, libalulekile koorhulumente bengingqi nakubasunguli bomgaqo-nkqubo.

1. INTRODUCTION

The introduction of Local Agenda 21 at the Rio Earth Summit has increased the impetus and momentum for addressing the imperative of building sustainable communities globally. This imperative has had particular purchase as a policy objective in South Africa since the mid-1990s, in a context where addressing community development needs in deprived communities became a new and urgent focus of local authorities across the country with the transition to democracy. The case study of 'No Messing in Bonteheuwel' is presented as a positive illustration of how the objective of building a sustainable community can be achieved.

Bonteheuwel was built as a new township to alleviate housing shortages for the 'Coloured communities' after the forced removals in the 1960s. The population is comprised of predominantly poor Afrikaans-speaking residents. Although, initially, the area was largely formal, a high housing demand means that living in backyard dwellings is a reality for many residents (Morange, 2002; Crankshaw, Gilbert & Morris, 2000). The township grew rapidly for decades and so did crime, poverty and environmental degradation. Whilst Local Agenda 21 emphasises the need for local communities to work with local government to address local problems, this imperative is not always straightforward to achieve. The community's dissatisfaction with the environmental problems provided a catalyst for the Bonteheuwel community, local government and community leaders to work together towards a common goal

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of addressing the environmental challenges. The metaphor of 'vicious and virtuous cycles' coined by Putman (1993), Cavaye (2000: 11), and Winters & Rifkin (2003: 43), who argue that virtuous cycles result in high levels of cooperation, trust, civic engagement and collective well-being, which are characteristics of a civic community (which will act and partake in collective local actions to solve environmental problems). The metaphor of vicious and virtuous cycles is used in this instance to trace a shift from a destructive to a constructive cycle of community development in Bonteheuwel. Through this common ambition, the community and local government worked together for the first time, building trust and relationships that have endured over more than ten years. The 'No Messing in Bonteheuwel' programme was initiated in 1999 by the Department of Community Development and Liaison in the City of Cape Town and community leaders in Bonteheuwel as a classic clean-up campaign which led to a series of activities and actions by the community and local government in partnership.

This article mainly focuses on partnerships between local government and local communities in the effective delivery of services and the creation of positive change in local areas, as recommended by Local Agenda 21.

2. METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH

The City of Cape Town is collaborating with Mistra Urban Futures, an international centre for sustainable development, and with four other global cities, including Gothenburg, Greater Manchester, Kisumu and Shanghai. The participating cities have a common vision of co-producing knowledge to create fair and equitable, green and environmentally resilient, and dense and efficient cities. Cape Town's approach to co-production has been operationalised through a partnership between the African Centre for Cities at the University of Cape Town and the City of Cape Town through a

Knowledge Transfer Programme. One of the objectives of the Knowledge Transfer Programme is to give legitimacy to policy processes by documenting exemplars from the City of Cape Town that can assist in the identification of alternate transition pathways to achieve sustainable development. City Officials were selected on a competitive basis to work with writing partners at the University of Cape Town to document their experience of policy development and implementation at the City. This article is part of this process.

As such, the case study of community development in Bonteheuwel has been a key project in which the City Official in this writing partnership has been involved between 1999 and 2010. First-hand experience of working with the community of Bonteheuwel, together with documentation that arose from the project, including minutes and agendas of meetings, workshop reports, evaluation reports and newspaper articles, constitute the primary data.¹

3. CONCEPTUAL APPROACH

The approach used for understanding community development over a period of time in Bonteheuwel is described as a shift from a vicious to a virtuous cycle of community development. The first entry point to understand the shifts from one cycle to another draws on the literature on social capital, focusing on the development and nature of

relationships within the community. The second focus is on partnership-building, specifically between communities and local government. Together, these two approaches provide a conceptual approach for understanding the shift between a vicious and virtuous cycle of community development.

3.1 Social capital

Indicators of sustainable community development include the efficient use of space, minimising the consumption of essential natural capital (Roseland, 2005: 10-15), increasing local economic diversity, self-reliance, reduction in the use of energy, careful management and recycling of waste products, protection and enhancement of biological diversity, and careful stewardship of natural resources (Bridger & Luloff, 2001: 379-383). Together with these quantitative indicators, factors including increasing social capital and mobilising citizens and their governments to achieve these goals, as well as the fostering of social justice are also identified as being critical components of sustainable community development (Roseland, 2005: 10). Bridger & Luloff (2001: 383) and Dale & Newman (2010: 5) argue that developing social capital in a community is one of the priority factors that need to be enhanced in the development of sustainable communities in the future.

The term 'social capital' emerged in writings by authors such as Bourdieu (1986), Coleman (1988: 98) and Putman (1993). Bourdieu (1986: 240), a sociologist, first defined 'social capital' as "[a] network-based resource", or "[t]he aggregate of actual or potential resources linked to possession of a durable network". Coleman (1988: 98) defined the concept as "... trustworthiness of social environment, which makes reciprocity exchanges and information channels, norms and effective sanctions, and appropriate social organizations, or associations that are established for a specific purpose, but can be appropriated for broader use". Building on these definitions, Putman (1993: 167) defines social capital as "the features of social organizations

¹ One such document was the "The Bonteheuwel Beyond 2010" research report that focused on Appreciative Inquiry (AI) in developing a vision for a greener, cleaner and an environmentally friendly Bonteheuwel. In addition, the conference paper, *Towards a Sustainable Future: The Bonteheuwel Case Study*, which was delivered at the 11th Winelands International Conference on Public and Development in April 2008, also provided helpful insight. It focused on the 'No Messing in Bonteheuwel' project since its inception and how it was able to put Bonteheuwel on a path to a more sustainable future (Arendse, 2008: 1-13). In addition, the University of Johannesburg's Centre for Culture and Languages' *Citizen Green Paper* research document was also used, because it covers a summary of best practices, i.e., national and international in respect to active citizenship (Erlank, Tshabangu, Murray, Maptisa & Sekhonyana, 2008).

such as trust, norms, and networks that can improve the efficiency of society by facilitating coordinated actions". In the context of this article, social capital is thus understood to be based on the notion that social interaction matters, since it creates social networks, fosters trust and creates community which, as will be shown in the following sections, were important aspects for the success of the 'No Messing in Bonteheuwel' project.

3.2 Partnerships

The introduction of Local Agenda 21 at the Rio Earth summit has the effect of increasing the impetus and building of momentum for creating sustainable communities worldwide. The key message of Local Agenda 21 is that of local communities working with local government to address local environmental issues. Local Agenda 21 provides a basic framework for understanding sustainable communities, particularly through identifying the objectives of improved social, economic and environmental quality of human settlements (Selman & Parker, 1997: 181). This includes the living and working environments of all people, in particular the urban poor in communities. The definition of community is contested and thus our focus will be on geographical communities which are based in the locality of Bonteheuwel. These geographical communities are a preferred option for sustainable community development, because they suggest features of common needs and goals, a sense of common good, shared lives, and collective action (Bridger & Luloff, 2001: 458; Selman & Parker, 1997: 175). The environment is a critical component of geographical communities, and environmental issues are important in bringing a community together and serving as a catalyst for community action (Ife, 1999: 166-167; Selman & Parker, 1997: 176).

Davies (2002: 195-197) highlights the importance of partnerships for sustainable community development, and identifies the building of trust as a key component for this. Boydell (2007: 5) defines partnerships as

being "formed where two or more organizations make a commitment to work together on something that concerns both, to develop a shared sense of purpose and agenda, and to generate joint action towards agreed targets".

Pretty & Ward (2001: 209-213) and Davies (2002: 195) identify structured interactions within communities and community partnership with local government, which help to build social capital and improve relations between the two entities. Ling (2002: 626-628) as well as Packer, Spence & Beare (2002: 316-319) summarise structured interactions, by explaining that it is helpful to understand the partnership in terms of its membership. Members within the partnership can be quantified and identified as local government departments, community representatives, non-governmental organisations, provincial governments, and businesses. These structured interactions between the partners are important and are enforced through project implementation activities. The second aspect regarding links between partners can best be explained *via* Pretty & Ward (2001: 212) through vertical and horizontal connections:

- **Local connections** – strong connections between individuals and within local groups and communities.
- **Local-local connections** – horizontal connections between groups within communities or between communities, which sometimes become platforms for new higher level institutional structures.
- **Local-external connections** – vertical connections between local groups and external agencies, leading organisations, being one way (usually top down) or two-way.

Partnerships have to operate within a context of strong vertical and horizontal connections, linking the many actors involved in the community as well as local government, NGOs and any other partners that might be involved in a project such as the 'No Messing in Bonteheuwel' project. In addition, consistency, structured interactions

and semi-formal and informal interactions between partners can also be viewed as a measurement of success in partnerships (Davies, 2002: 195). Partnerships are thus clearly keys to building trust and creating a virtuous cycle in a community such as Bonteheuwel.

3.2.1 Vicious and virtuous cycles in sustainable community development

Putman (1993), Cavaye (2000: 11) and Winters & Rifkin (2003: 43) identified two cycles, i.e., the vicious and the virtuous cycles that exist in communities. Putman (1993) explains that a self-reinforcing virtuous cycle is sustained by competent communities with high social capital. Conversely, uncivil communities are sustained by a vicious cycle, where they are not proactive and have poor interactions with government. Putman (1993) explains: "...low social capital will lead a community into a vicious cycle, draining its social capital and transforming it into a less civic community. The virtuous cycle on the other hand will increase high levels of social capital which leads to a productive community. These productive communities will act and partake in local actions." The vicious cycle includes poor understanding between local government and the community, which leads to distrust between the community and the local government – for example, the oft-muttered refrain "government never listens" indicates a relationship between the community and the state that is not based on trust, but rather this perception is reinforced and perpetuated over a period of time.

Conversely, the virtuous cycle consists of an informed and clear understanding of roles and responsibilities between local government and the communities. In the case of local government-implemented projects, this could involve the community having a clear understanding of the mandate of different local government departments in relation to service delivery to their community. This clear understanding of the role and responsibility of local government with regard to service delivery

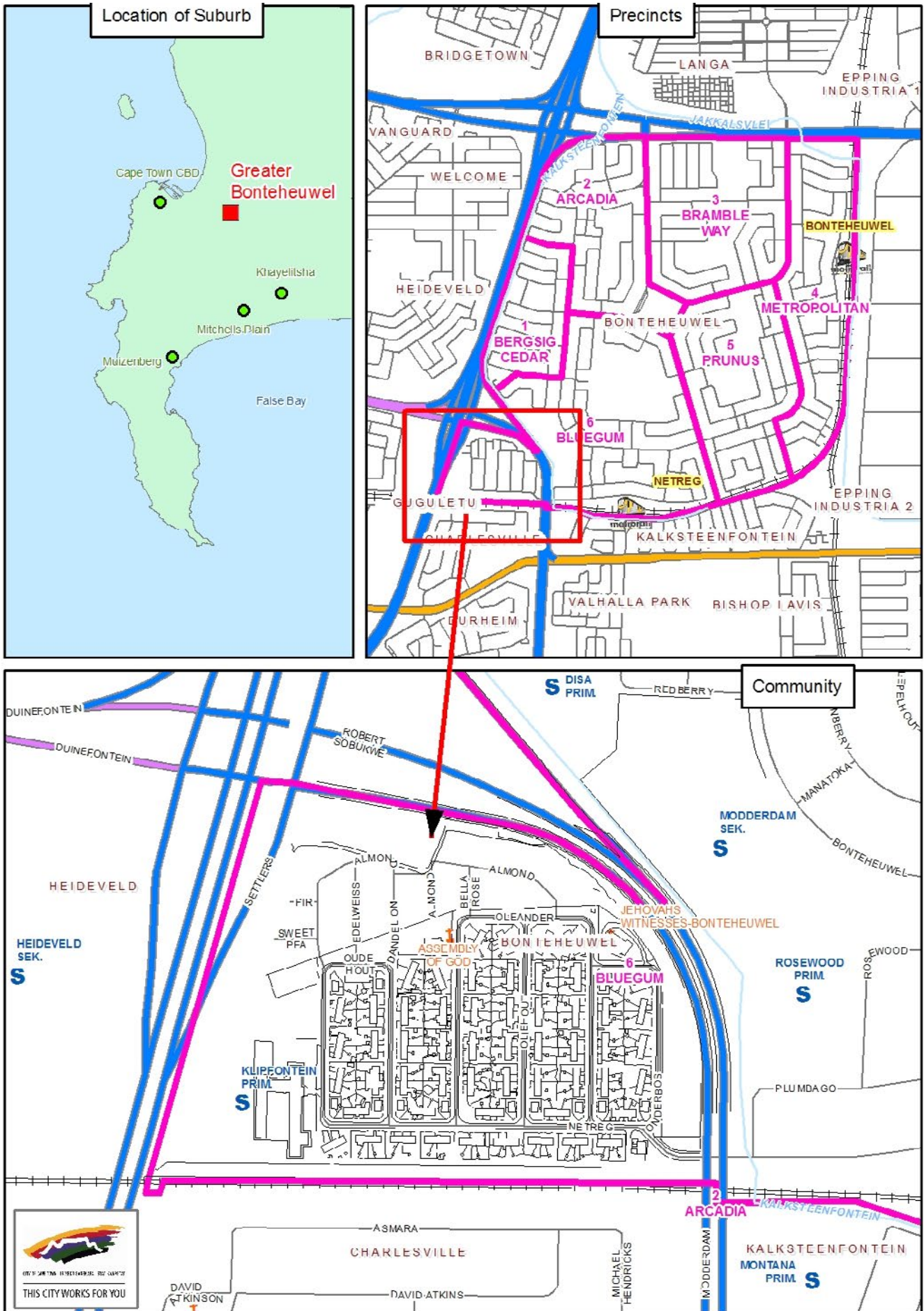


Figure 1: The Map of Bonteheuwel and six precincts

Source: Abrahams & Fine (2003: 12)

will mean that they know who to contact, should a problem arise. In this instance, clear communication between local government and the community leads to healthy relationships and improved levels of trust. This, in turn, also promotes the different community sectors and non-governmental organisations as partners. This results in a partnership that is built between community and local government, where communities feel that their voices are heard. Ife (1999: 191) argues further that sustainable community development requires a common activity, for example, a recycling project that can bring people together. This common activity will strengthen local and social interactions and community bonds. The movement from a vicious cycle to a virtuous one, therefore, includes the development of partnerships between local government and communities.

4. THE CASE OF THE BONTEHEUWEL COMMUNITY

Bonteheuwel, a township in South Africa, is situated 20 km on the outskirts of the Cape Town central business district and was built in the 1960s as a new neighbourhood to accommodate 'Coloured' families who were being forcibly removed from other areas of Cape Town which were demarcated as 'White'. The development of the township was based and modelled on the Garden Cities-design approach. Chapman (1986: 20) describes it as a Garden City, with a distinct underlying hierarchy of route structure, schools and centres depending on their function (type and level of service), threshold (population numbers served and their spending power), and range (geographical area of service). The township has 16 open spaces, 19 parks, 109 roads and 4 community centres. The 2011 Census indicates a population of 32 977 with an average household size of 4.69 and a monthly household income of R3 200 or less for 50 per cent of households (City of Cape Town, 2013: 1-7).

Since the Project's inception, the following segments of the

Bonteheuwel community were part of the project and were targeted as follows:

- The Bonteheuwel School Children and teachers through the Cleanest Schools Campaign and greening.
- The Bonteheuwel Households through the Door-to-Door Environmental Education and Waste Wise Workshops.
- Unemployed community residents through the various clean-up campaigns.

- The Bonteheuwel Environment Forum became a recognised vehicle to spread the 'No Messing in Bonteheuwel' to local businesses.
- Other organisations through environmental stories in the local media.
- Volunteers from the streets.

During the 1990s, the area was plagued by numerous sources of pollution. Land pollution was characterised by extreme littering in all the streets and parks. Illegal dumping compounded the issue,



Figure 2: Illegal dumpsites near Arcadia Primary

Source: Photo taken by Wilmot Arendse



Figure 3: Illegal dumpsites near Bonteheuwel houses and a church

Source: Photo taken by Wilmot Arendse

with 32 illegal dumpsites across the community (Figures 2 and 3). The illegal dumpsites posed great health risks for the entire community, although children playing in the vicinity were most vulnerable to sickness and ill health from the pollution. Air pollution, caused by illegal tyre burning in parks and open fields left toxic fumes and a grey haze over the township. Water pollution was caused by littering in the river (located at the far end of the community) which caused mosquito plagues. The nature of the littering was exacerbated by the Cape Town weather conditions, particularly by the strong south-easterly wind blowing the litter across the neighbourhood. Subsequently, when the wet, rainy season started, blockages of storm-water pipes resulted in flooding.

In 1999, the pollution issue was of such a catastrophic nature that the community decided to pursue a solution because it posed a threat to their quality of life. The turning point came for the community when the stench became unbearable and people became sick with skin rashes and asthmatic conditions. Medical waste was found at various illegal dumpsites, including dead bodies (Arendse, 2008: 5). Approaching local government was understood to be a fair approach in order to devise a plan to address the issues related to the pollution. The first interaction between the local government departments and the community took place in April 1999 at the Bonteheuwel Civic Centre (Arendse, 2008: 6). The community was represented by various community leaders from different organisations and concerned parents. The representative departments from local government included Solid Waste, Environmental Health and City Parks, and the meeting was facilitated by the City's Community Development and Liaison Department (Erlank *et al.*, 2008: 46).

The first meeting between the community and the local government representatives indicated the extent of the community's frustration and anger at their situation. This was the result of decades of marginalisation by the apartheid government in

terms of poor service delivery to the township. The initial meeting was important; an understanding of the environmental crisis was outlined and the need for frequent interactions between the various local government departments and the community was highlighted as a requirement to deal effectively with the pollution crisis. In a subsequent meeting between the parties, it was decided that a clean-up campaign would be the first step to deal with the environmental crisis. Parker & Selman (1997: 76) note that people's primary environmental concerns are expressed in local terms, and results indicate that people's trust and identification with local government will need to be rebuilt partly via new mechanisms, with local government listening to public views. The first meetings between the stakeholders proved to be important in this process.

Erlank *et al.* (2008: 45-46), who wrote extensively about the project, describe how the community and government arrived at the decision to start a clean-up campaign: "... the choice of the environment as a priority [was] made at a consultation meeting between community leaders and local government officials. It was hoped that a cleaner town would encourage civic pride and lead to a reduction in crime while clean-up projects could create work and thus assist in the amelioration of poverty. By addressing the environmental problems, the community hoped to have a positive impact on other issues of concern as well". The clean-up campaign was driven by a joint task team consisting of local government officials and community representatives. The clean-up campaign was of a basic nature in that it encompassed picking up papers in the streets, at community centres, at schools and in 19 parks. The partnership had a significant impact, as community members of all ages participated in this campaign. It was supported by the Department of Cleansing who provided refuse bags for the clean-up and removed the bags of litter afterwards.

The clean-up strategy was deemed a success, largely as a result of

the partnership between local government and the community and the greater sense of unity that stemmed from this meaningful interaction with regard to pollution. After an evaluation, the joint task team decided to continue with the partnership, a decision that resulted in the birth of the 'No Messing in Bonteheuwel' partnership project.² Dugmore (2002: 9) summarises the project: "The project is about teaching people to take control of the quality of their lives. It's about showing them that they do not need to live in an area choked with litter, where people dump without any sense of their neighbours or the environment."

In 2003,³ following the success and growth of the project, there was a need to formalise the partners into a successful partnership project. The process of formalisation of the partners' frequent interactions between the various local government departments and the Bonteheuwel community was structured by the non-governmental organisation (NGO) Fairest Cape Association. The latter held a range of workshops with numerous role players and partners, including local government officials. These workshops mapped out a structure for driving the project as well as for the establishment of the Bonteheuwel Environmental Forum (BEF) as the driving force behind it.

The project is an innovative, classic clean-up campaign that has accomplished much in a poor, crime-ridden community over a decade. This resulted in clean and green streets, both literally and figuratively, with wholesale buy-in from the local community, schools, the local businesses as well as local

2 The Project caught the eye of the regional print media. The *Cape Argus* (Sylvester, 2002), in support of the success of the project, penned the following headline: "Colourfill Hill gets makeover" with the by line: "The community of Bonteheuwel has banded together to brighten up this long-neglected suburb."

3 Prior to this, various activities took place from 1999 to 2002, including a waste fashion show for kids, poetry competitions, poetry competitions for schools, the establishment of street-sweeping committees, the community environmental procession, and a 'No Messing in Bonteheuwel' community information cassette.

and provincial government. This provides an interesting case study to explore a City-level contribution to the promotion of, and contribution towards environmental citizenship, particularly in a low-income neighbourhood on the Cape Flats of Cape Town. The following detailed analysis was compiled with a focus on the content and evolution of the project.

5. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT IN BONTEHEUWEL

In understanding the transition from a vicious to a virtuous cycle in Bonteheuwel, the approach has been to understand how social capital was developed in a divided community. The case study traces how the development of social capital has led to the development of partnerships beyond the community. The development of partnerships over time specifically with local government, are shown to have a positive impact on the delivery of services and a transition towards sustainable community development.

5.1 The process of building social capital

The project helped with the process of building local social capital by using various methods such as frequent interaction, information-sharing and coordinated actions for over a decade between local government and the community.

It is important to understand the nature of the relationship between local government and the community prior to the implementation of the project and the process involved in building social capital over a period of time. Hitner & Jenkin (1976: 50) and Chapman (1986: 30) argue that, from 1970 to the 1980s, animosity towards local government existed and increased due to a lack of proper consultation with the community. The Bonteheuwel community showed few signs of internal cohesion or satisfaction with respect to their residential area, despite the fact that they had access to basic amenities and were in a far better situation than those in other low-income suburbs.

The dissatisfaction of the community was illustrated by the organised mass action of residents, marches to the rent offices, rent boycotts and vandalism of local government property. This situation continued during the early 1990s-1999 and is summarised by Moodley (2006: 58) as an "area where there were major environmental problems, political infighting, high levels of distrust in local government and bloody gang wars."

The premise of the project was to transform the area and positively change the mindset of the community, especially where living in such dirty conditions was viewed as a normal part of life. Cavaye (2000: 11-14), Putnam (1993) and Winters & Rifkin (2003: 43) argue that social capital is likely to be high when people interact frequently with each other. During 1999, the project kick-started the interaction between the community and local government on every street. Sylvester (2002: 10) highlights these interactions on the streets as the Bonteheuwel community banding together to change the "mean streets" of Bonteheuwel by tackling the "grime".

The Appreciative Inquiry (AI)⁴ process was held in 2004 to create a positive conversation in the community and developed a vision of a clean, greener and more environmentally friendly Bonteheuwel. This research was conducted throughout Bonteheuwel and focused on reimagining a better Bonteheuwel for 2010. The vision of one respondent is summarised as follows: "I had a dream that one day in 2010 all will be well and everything will be green and all my people will be happy" (Arendse, 2005: 1-8). Esau (2009: 391) argues that this AI process was useful in elucidating viewpoints and concerns of the community, its leaders and local government. The information-sharing between local government and the community regarding the project expanded and further developed social capital. The project utilised the monthly meetings

effectively in order to discuss environmental issues, and targeted households by way of door-to-door campaigns, environmental opinion polls, newsletters, and coverage in local newspapers.

On 21 September 2006, a Bonteheuwel Environmental Indaba⁵ was held to provide feedback to the community regarding the 'No Messing in Bonteheuwel' project. The Indaba provided feedback to the community on the success of the project and highlighted the new partnership between the community and local government, which is an illustration of improved social capital. Van Warmelo (2007: 7) suggests that the project built social capital, stating that "No Messing Bonteheuwel' is a superb example of generating community spirit through environmental awareness and action". It is important to understand that building social capital is a continuous process with interdependent co-ordinated action such as frequent interaction, information-sharing between the community, local government and other partners.

5.2 The importance of partnerships in striving for a virtuous cycle

Whilst partnerships are not the only form of collective action, they have been shown to be an effective means of building social capital to effect long-term changes (Bridger & Luloff, 1999). Indeed, partnerships between various actors have been found to be a key ingredient to the success of the 'No Messing in Bonteheuwel'. Ling (2002: 627) argues that, in order to understand partnerships fully, there is a need to know and understand who the partners in the project are. In this case study, the partners were local government, community members, civil society organisations, and the business community. They were all assigned different roles and made their own unique contributions to the project from 2003 to 2010. The six community representatives represented six smaller subdivisions

4 An Appreciate Inquiry is a method for studying and changing communities envisioning what might be and engaging in dialogue about what should be (Bowling & Brahm 2002: online).

5 Indaba: a Zulu word meaning a meeting to discuss a serious topic (Free Online Dictionary, 2014: 1).

(geographical precincts) of Bonteheuwel, namely Bergsig/Cedar, Bluegum, Arcadia, Bramble Way, Metropolitan, and Prunus. The six precincts are sub-areas with clear boundaries around schools, churches and community centres.

The Bonteheuwel Multipurpose Centre (MPC) provided the venue (at no cost) for events, monthly meetings, and workshops. In addition, they also provided land for a food garden project in 2004; incidentally, the vacant land behind the MPC was the worst illegal dumpsite in Bonteheuwel prior to the project. The food garden was initiated by the Bonteheuwel Environment Forum (BEF) and City of Cape Town City Parks Department, who proposed the food garden project after various meetings with the MPC. The BEF included representation from each of the six precincts, and the agreement for the use of the MPC included a requirement for the BEF to be central in taking ownership of the food garden. Urban Green File (2008: online) explains that "the forum worked closely with the council and together they made significant changes in the community. The illegal dumping sites were transformed into food gardens, children's play areas and parks. The produce from the food garden is donated to feeding schemes, sold to the community at below market prices and used to supplement the incomes of the community members who keep Bonteheuwel clean. Seedlings from the garden are also given to community members that are involved in the project." The garden is a sustainable project, because it is currently (2014) still in operation and is run by one of the BEF community representatives.

The Fairest Cape Association NGO facilitated the training of 60 volunteers in environmental education and thereafter assisted with the facilitation of Community Waste Wise Workshops in Bonteheuwel. In addition, they trained 22 educators in Bonteheuwel primary schools in environmental education. The Bonteheuwel business sector assisted with donations for all the environmental events.

The Bonteheuwel Community News and Athlone News assisted with local media coverage and reported on environmental issues and the activities of the BEF. This helped create awareness of the events and promoted the partnership to the broader community. The 19 schools participated in highly successful Cleanest School Campaign as well as all other environmental events, activities and workshops. Students from the then Peninsula Technikon (now Cape Peninsula University of Technology) assisted with events and formed part of the exchange of learning.

The Provincial Department of Community Safety - Cape Renewal Strategy assisted with funding for environmental education workshops. The first group of 27 participants and a second group of 30 participants received Environmental Education training in February 2002 and in March 2002, respectively, at the Kristo Pienaar Environmental Centre. These 57 community members were actively involved in the 'No Messing in Bonteheuwel' project from its inception. These trained participants became monitors in their respective streets, encouraging neighbours to keep streets tidy and clean. These participants were also involved in both drafting the Bonteheuwel Environment Plan and electing precinct leaders to interact with local government departments at meetings.

The City of Cape Town's Department of Cleansing-West assisted with all the activities regarding the cleaning of the community (such as litter picking - providing black bags and brooms). The Department of City Parks-West assisted with all the activities related to greening (including providing grass, trees, and plants). The Department of Environmental Health assisted with educating the community and other partners in environmental health issues and reported any potential problematic environmental issues in the community. The role and contribution of the Department of Storm Water and Roads-West was core to the implementation of the flood-prevention project and the

cleaning of gutters and storm-water pipes and upgrading of pavements in Bonteheuwel. The Ward Councillor assisted with funding for the project. The Department of Community Development and Liaison-West assisted with providing the necessary administrative support for the project and the facilitation of monthly meetings, workshops and the writing of all the reports.

5.3. Why did this partnership succeed?

Different types of partnership, as put forward by Pretty & Ward (2001: 212), include local connections, local-local connections and local-external connections. These categories are useful in establishing the types of relationships that were built and nurtured through the 'No Messing in Bonteheuwel' project.

The local connections refer to strong relationships between and within the group. The BEF is comprised of male and female community representatives from different religious backgrounds and political affiliations. However, the representatives moved beyond their backgrounds and personal beliefs, focused on the project and worked together toward a common goal. Problems were solved by means of open-ended discussions in monthly meetings. The forum matured and evolved as partners and community representatives worked together; as new needs and challenges were identified, they addressed these as a unit. The various community representatives had their own precinct to work in and this helped tremendously with project implementation, because the local people could take ownership.

The local-local connections between partners had strong connections with all the project partners, especially the schools and the MPC. This was evident, because the MPC provided venues as meeting space for a whole decade, at no cost, as well as venues for all activities, including environmental days. Furthermore, the project had a strong connection with local community newspapers that provided publicity for the project,

at no cost. The local-external connections were clearly illustrated when community representatives served as the eyes and ears on any environmental issues in their respective areas, while the local government officials were proactive, using their expertise and skills to plan and implement activities to prevent possible pollution.

Cavaye (2000: 23) proposes that the desired outcome/result of any partnership should be government sharing decisions with the community and this can be measured *via* all joint activities involving local government and community partners on a particular project. The 'No Messing in Bonteheuwel' project illustrates this from its inception, as decision-making was shared between the various partners at planning and implementation levels, and can be further demonstrated by the number of joint activities (32) that took place from 2002 to 2010.

One key lesson that can be drawn when tracing the joint activities of the project (1999-2010) is to start on a small scale with manageable activities so that improvement should be noticeable over time. The second lesson that can be gleaned from these activities is that the project focused on vulnerable sectors of the community, including youth, women, the unemployed, the disabled, and seniors, thus reinforcing a sense of total inclusivity to the community projects. The project created 999 temporary jobs for unemployed residents; 329 of these jobs were occupied by females.

Furthermore, Davies (2002: 198) argues that consistency is crucial for the success of any partnership. The 'No Messing in Bonteheuwel' project was blessed with the consistency of its partners and members. The people who initiated the project remained involved for at least eight years. Community representatives' membership remained consistent from 1999 to 2010, as did the local government officials. Although the Peninsula Technikon left the project in 2005 and the Fairest Cape Association NGO exited the project in 2006, the MPC and the

Bonteheuwel local businesses continued their involvement (1999-2010). The Bonteheuwel Community News (1999-2010) was a consistent partner and the 19 local schools' involvement also remained consistent throughout the project. This continuity of membership helped with the success of the project and, in turn, built the social capital that resulted in a virtuous development cycle.

In addition to consistency, Davies (2002: 194) points out that a second important tool with which to measure success in partnerships is that of structured interactions as a measure of sustainable community partnerships. In the 'No Messing in Bonteheuwel' project, structured interaction between partners took the form of monthly meetings. The BEF held a total of 96 monthly meetings between 1999 and 2010, which had the purpose of planning activities, sharing information, interacting with partners, and reporting back on progress/feedback. The meetings also functioned as decision-making spaces, for example, deciding on dates for activities to take place, which streets and schools to target, as well as which 'hotspots' should be tackled. The local government officials took a listening stance at the meetings, and rather focused on implementation of the decisions made by the stakeholders present at the monthly meetings. This process helped the partners gain experience in meeting procedures, planning skills, relationship-building skills, project management skills, and negotiation skills. This also formed part of capacity-building for the members to enable them to function more effectively in their roles.

Moreover, Davies (2002: 195-196) points out that the semi-formal and informal interactions between the partners is an additional way to evaluate partnerships. In this instance, these interactions can be illustrated by the fact that officials from the different departments involved in the project informally visited the homes of community representatives serving on the forum. In turn, community representatives were given access to the officials' private cellular telephone numbers,

thus enabling the community to call on the officials when they needed assistance with matters with which the local government officials could help. The semi-formal and informal interactions also occurred during the implementation of the clean-up campaigns and frequently during all joint activities.

The 'No Messing in Bonteheuwel' project's success was largely built on partnerships. A local magazine reported that "The project has helped forge a close working relationship between the community, community leaders, various City of Cape Town Departments, provincial government and other NGOs. The Partnership between community and government was a learning experience for all and also helped a great deal with trust and relationship building" (Moodley, 2006: 58). Cavaye (2000: 8) and Hibbitt, Jones & Meegan (2002: 141) state that trust and mistrust also exist in partnerships between local government and the community. This is true for the Bonteheuwel case study. Prior to the implementation of the 'No Messing in Bonteheuwel' project, the community mistrusted local government, because they inappropriately delivered services without community engagement or buy-in. It was common to hear the community say, "We never see local government", "local government does not work for us", and/or "local government is useless..." The 'No Messing in Bonteheuwel' project's challenge after 1999 was to acknowledge the mistrust that existed and to manage it effectively, while establishing the new partnership between local government and the Bonteheuwel community. Over the course of the project, trust was built through sharing information at the meetings; providing a platform for direct interaction between the community and local government officials; opening up the lines of communication and providing ways for officials to be contactable at reasonable times; time was taken to inform the community of the mandates and roles of various local government departments, and resources were shared by various partners, e.g., the City

provided refuse bags, trees, plants and training for the project. Furthermore, the success of the project both at grassroots level and as acknowledged through a national award conferred by the Sowetan, Old Mutual and South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC) Community Builder of the Year Group 2004 in the Western Cape reinforced levels of trust, and contributed to building and strengthening relationships between all the stakeholders involved in the project.

6. LESSONS FOR FOSTERING VIRTUOUS CYCLES OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

The Bonteheuwel community was under siege by environmental degradation and, as such, trapped in a vicious cycle. The vicious cycle had distinctive features which were reinforced by poor relationships both within the community and between the community and local government. The implementation of the 'No Messing in Bonteheuwel' project started a transition from a vicious to a virtuous cycle for the community. The key role players in this transition were the City of Cape Town and the Bonteheuwel community. The project's successes are highlighted through partnerships and members (community representatives, non-governmental organisations, local government departments and the media). These partnerships are a clear manifestation of local connections, local-local connections and local-external connections. Davies (2002: 201) argues that successful partnerships have consistent partners over a period of time, and encourage structured interaction between partners and semi-formal and informal interactions, aspects to which this project ascribed. The availability of a safe, free and available space in the form of the community hall was significant to allow the community to organise and meet, both formally and informally. Furthermore, working together on a common objective that all parties wanted to address was crucial to the success of the project. The case study shows that it was

not a single event that led to the development of social capital and partnerships, but rather, that ongoing events provided a continuous momentum for the development of social cohesion within the community and between the community and local government.

Blaxter, Farnell & Watts (2003: 134) prescribe that building trust between local government and the community and other partners requires time, resources, imagination and skill. The partners working together on the 'No Messing in Bonteheuwel' project improved and developed trust over time, using resources, imagination and skill. Maloney, Smith & Stoker (2000: 817) summarise the key lessons of this project, as documented in this article. They note that "[w]here local authorities develop new partnerships, they are not only creating opportunities for developing new forms of relationships with other local actors, but will also affect previous social capital relationships with associations."

The endorsement and ongoing support from local government led to the development of other partnerships which further strengthened the community effort. This combination of a shared long-term vision, consistency, commitment and ongoing support has strengthened partnerships that have underscored the shift from a virtuous to a vicious cycle in Bonteheuwel. This case study illustrates that the development of sustainable communities is not simply about the delivery of services from local government to a community, but that implementation efforts must also be focused on strengthening and enabling the fabric and cohesion of the community. This can only occur through the development of long-term relationships with communities, to enable a better understanding of the fit of the implementation intervention and the extent to which these will be taken up and supported by communities.

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