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Project: Siya Sonke

Asset-based Citizen-driven Development and socioeconomic transformation with families in Makana Municipality

Interim Progress Report

Project Cycle: 2017 – 2021 (June)

Project Composition:

- ✘ Child – and Youth Development (Siya Sonke children and youth)
- ✘ Capacity Building, Entrepreneurial Development, Project Follow-up (Siya Sonke adults)

Partners :

- ✘ 35 Families from Joza community: Direct partners: 42 adults (35 women), 46 children (20 adolescents)
- ✘ Rhodes University Community Engagement (RUCE)
- ✘ Diocesan School for Girls (DSG)
- ✘ Ikhala Trust
- ✘ CoP (ABCD Community of Practice)

With Special Thanks to our Funders:

- ✘ Ikhala Trust
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CONTENT

1. Introduction	1
1.1 Context.....	1
1.2 Rationale: Asset-based Citizen-driven Development (ABCD).....	1
1.3 Siya Sonke Partners.....	1
1.4 Project Description.....	2
1.5 Project Goals.....	2
2. Monitoring and Evaluation.....	3
3. Findings.....	3
3.1 Human Assets.....	4
3.2 Social Assets.....	5
3.3 Natural Assets.....	6
3.4 Material Assets.....	7
3.5 Economic Assets.....	8
4. Reflection.....	9
4.1 Siya Sonke Aim: Social Cohesion.....	10
4.2 Siya Sonke Aim: Increased Economic Independence and Participation.....	11
5. Way Forward.....	12

Acronyms

ABCD	Asset-based Citizen-driven Development
CSD	Centre for Social Development
CoP	Community of Practice (for ABCD practitioners)
CWP	Community Work Programme
DPSA	Disabled People South Africa
ECD	Early Childhood Development
ECNGOC	Eastern Cape NGO Coalition
NPO	Non-Profit Organisation
REP	Repetition
RUCE	Rhodes University Community Engagement

1. Introduction

'Siya Sonke' is the language of the amaXhosa people and means "We are going together". The project aims at promoting social cohesion, increased economic participation and independence of families and healthy life-choices as well as an increased Grade 12 pass rate of children and youth.

1.1 Context

We work with people who have lived in poverty over generations. In the Eastern Cape Province, over 72,8 % of the population lives below the poverty line which is ZAR 1,138 per person per month (Statistics South Africa, 2017). Women are proportionally more affected than men (ibid). We are situated in Makhanda/ Grahamstown in the Eastern Cape of South Africa. 80 % of the residents are unemployed and rely on welfare grants and seasonal jobs. Unemployment, inequality and poverty have been defined as the triple challenge in our area (ECNGOC, 2013). Poverty is traumatising and has led to symptoms of social and physical ill-health replicating its cycle over many generations. For example, there is a critical drop-out trend to be found among youth over the age of 14 with 60 % leaving school before reaching grade 12 (DG Murray Trust/ Hartnack 2017). The Sarah Baartman District, which Makhanda is part of, has the earliest sexual debut of girls (from the age of 12 years). Gender-based violence and Intergenerational intimate relationships between girls and young women with older men for gifts and money have become a precarious reality. There have been many initiatives aimed at addressing poverty and its symptoms, mainly by NPOs and Government in the last few decades.

1.2 Rationale – Asset-based Citizen-driven Development (ABCD)

We have worked in the field of Community health for the last 20 years. Since 2015, we have broadened our mandate and incorporated community development into our work. We are convinced that the widely employed 'deficit approach' has been invaluable for disaster relief and ad-hoc-help. However, we have experienced that if applied to local development only it does little for change. Its interventions have been usually top-down, focused on poverty symptoms only and even though well meaning, it has had a tendency to re-enforce dependency and helplessness and therefore has kept people at the socio-economic margins of society.

Our work is rooted in an Asset-based Citizen-driven Development (ABCD) paradigm. ABCD is an emerging strength-based model for sustainable social and economic transformation. It has gained traction among Government, corporate, academic and NPO sector as a key strategy for local change in South Africa. Income (for consumption) has been the standard strategy and measure of poverty. Yet authors already have emphasised that breaking the cycle of intergenerational poverty seems to occur when people build and grow a *multitude* of assets (Sherraden 1991; Carter and Barret 2006, Moser 2008). ABCD recognizes and promotes the growth of different types of assets: human (e.g. motivation, self-confidence, knowledge, skills, talents), social (working through or building social networks), natural (e.g. growing own food), material (e.g. gardening tools, mobile phone, house, cooking appliances), economic (salary, savings, investment). Assets are found to be catalysts for civic movements, have emancipatory value by providing us with capacity to act. They form resources for livelihood and coping with life-setbacks. Also, they give a sense of identity and meaningful engagement with the world (Sherraden 1991; Carter and Barret 2006; Moser 2008). Its approach generates local knowledge and uncovers individual and community strengths (assets), links them with opportunities and builds from there. Its consciousness building and appreciative (appreciative inquiry) processes have proven to foster confidence of people, inspires and unlocks people-driven action.

1.3 Siya Sonke Partners

Our Siya Sonke partners are 36 families in Joza which is a peri-urban community in Makanda. We work closely with 36 adults (among them are 30 women) and 46 children and youth of these families. All of our partners are isi-Xhosa speaking. Most of the homes are women-headed families, and 86% are single women with children. The majority of our partners left school before they could reach Grade 12. In 2017, 84% of our partners were unemployed and relied on seasonal jobs or welfare grants as the only source of income. Others were employed with Community Work Programme (CWP) or Early Childhood Development (ECD)-sites and received a monthly stipend. Through our Siya Sonke partners we reach out to their social networks where we directly collaborate with about 1,250 individuals each year.

1.4 Project Description

Siya Sonke was started in 2017 and ends in June 2021. We began with ABCD training with our adult Siya Sonke partners and weekly life-skills and tutoring sessions for their children (sub-project 'Child and Youth Development'). Further, family asset-inventories were done, and long-/ short-term goals, as well as plans of action developed. Our adult Siya Sonke partners have formed five entrepreneurial groups. They are composed of women who wish to assist one another in formalising and establishing their businesses (crafting & sewing, farming, catering, early childhood development and small traders). Business-ideas, projects and group initiatives and family plans are followed-up regularly. We link our adult Siya Sonke partners and youth with our community partners for example for further skills development or collaboration.

Siya Sonke networks:

We work with peers of Siya Sonke children and youth through schools they attend but also involve other young family members and their friends. On average, they are 1050 children and youth each year. Our activities mainly focus on the social well-being and health promotion of children and youth. Furthermore, we facilitate introductions to strength-based thinking, asset-awareness (other than financial ones) and project development workshops (ABCD) with youth peers. We reach out to about 120 adults who are nominated by our adult Siya Sonke partners each year. We facilitate the full 4-day ABCD training course and project follow-up. The activities with social networks mean to stimulate ripple-effects and inspiration among residents. In addition, they aim at fostering community groups and collective, emancipated voices. We use events, such as 'Women's Day Celebration', ABCD Festival, Youth Debate and Indigenous Games for activities which involve knowledge-sharing and story-telling. We have found them to be powerful tools for learning and inspiring others.



1.5 Project Goals

Goals	Outputs	Indicators
Social cohesion	Sustainable community initiatives	Supportive networks & communal projects: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - People join/ form citizen-driven groups to work toward a common goal; - People assist each other with assets or teaching each other skills.
Increased economic independence & participation	People grow a multitude of assets & Increased self-sufficiency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - People are aware of assets and invest in them; - People have development plans; - Family income diversifies; - Family income, savings and investment increase.
Healthy life-choices	Teenage pregnancy drops	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increased self-esteem, motivation, awareness of strengths and social support networks; - School engagement and affiliation;
Increasing Matric Passing Rate	Improved academic performance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Improved school marks and reaching of matric; - Peer-support and team-work.

This report summarises findings on progress made with reference to the first two goals of 1) Social cohesion, and 2) Increased economic participation and independence of adult Siya Sonke partners.

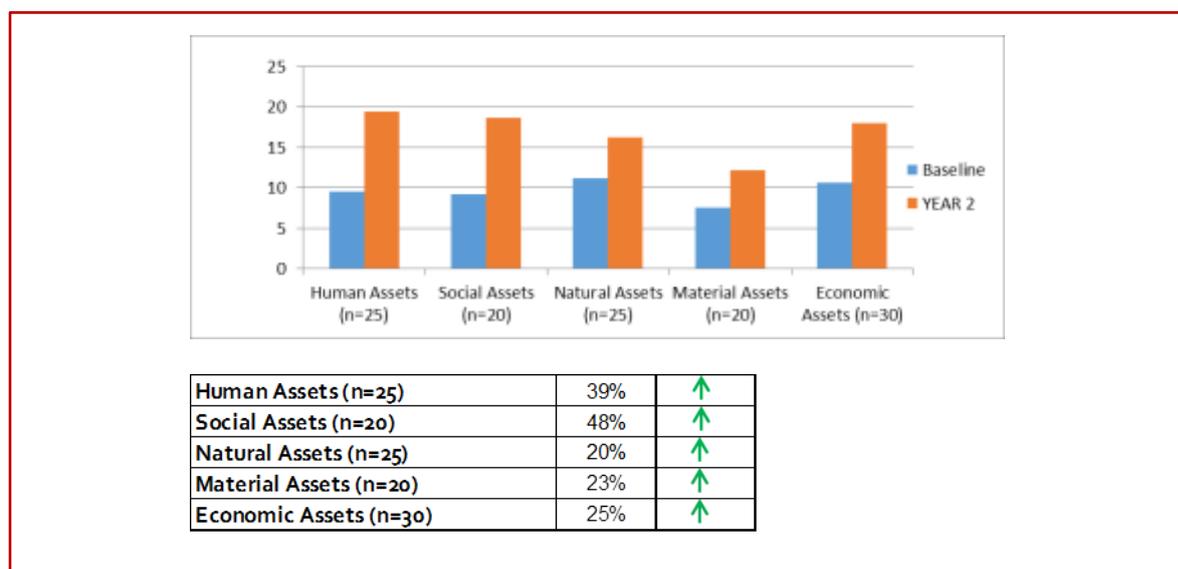
2 Monitoring and Evaluation

We have recorded progress made using quantitative (e.g. asset-assessment, outcome mapping) and qualitative (e.g. baseline questionnaire, group discussion, individual narratives) tools. For baseline and annual recording, we used a standard questionnaire. However, since this year, we could employ a new asset-assessment and analytic framework which was developed by the Ikhala Trust and Elamanzi. They developed it to measure and value organizational change. We adapted it to individual and family context accordingly. It is based on self-assessment through scoring and documents conversation about family assets in the following categories: human, social, natural, material and economic resources. This assessment was used as a retrospective baseline (2016/2017 - pre-exposure to ABCD) and as a 1st follow-up ('Repetition-1': REP1) for 2019. After the self-assessments, we compared the retrospective data with findings from the 1st baseline questionnaire which we conducted with our partners in the morning of the first day of ABCD training in 2016 and 2017. Assessments from REP-1 were linked with findings from old annual baseline questionnaire repetitions and outcome-mappings from 2017 and 2018 to have records about the process from the last two years. Going forward, we will continue using Ikhala Trust's asset-assessment and analytic framework as well as field notes from quarterly family visits for annual repetition. Appendix 1 explains the process of assessment and analysis with more detail. However, assessment and analysis could be completed with 31 individuals/ families. Four of our partners were difficult to get hold of because they found employment out of town.

3 Findings

The overall trend shows growth in all five asset-categories among our partners. The most dramatic increases were found among the Human Assets (nearly 40%) and Social Assets (nearly 48%). This was followed by growth among Economic Assets (25%), Material Assets (23%) and Natural Assets (20%).

Yet, downscaling trends were to be found among some individual assessments in specific subcategories of assets. For example, six people scored 'Infrastructure' with decrease, four individuals the 'Environmental Cleanliness', three 'Food Production' and two people measured 'Land Use' with a decline in REP1. The latter was related to less time capacity and to moving home. The rest of the decreases were the result of external forces which were not entirely within the power of the partners. For a while, Makana was led by a corrupt Municipality which is currently bankrupt. This has led to increasing infrastructural problems (e.g. supply of clean water, proper roads, housing, waste management) which will take time to improve again. Besides, droughts have become more frequent in the Eastern Cape. And, during the time when the asset-assessment was facilitated, we were in a severe water crisis so there was no tap-water available in parts of our town for over six weeks. We think that in our area, increasing self-reliance in having access to clean water is such an important aspect that we need to consult with Siya Sonke partners to elaborate on ways to develop this. Only one partner measured her income with decrease. This was due to current personal circumstances.



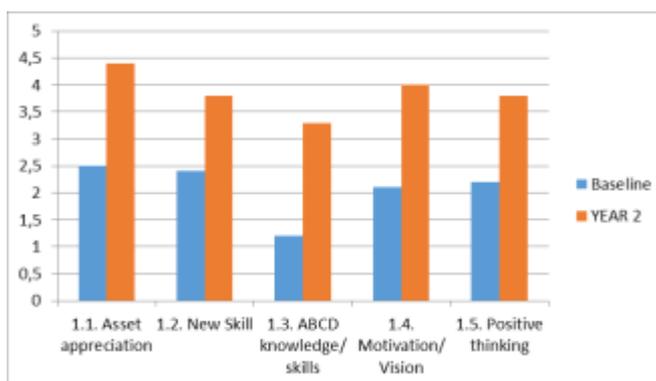
Picture 1: Average Trend among 31 Siya Sonke partners

3.1 Human Assets:

Findings:

The most important changes felt by Siya Sonke partners were: the way of thinking, having aspirations, knowing how/ where to start: 1) *With ABCD the way I think and talk now has changed. It brought a difference to my life.* 2) *ABCD changed my life because now I have a goal to achieve which is something new for me. Also, I know now how to budget.* 3) *ABCD made me aware of my assets and how to start using them.* People used to acknowledge their practical skills (e.g. gardening, sewing, beadwork, poetry, painting, carpentry, soap and Vaseline-making, cooking, farming). But

these skills often were taken for granted and not related to something which could potentially add value to their life or as something to build from. Also, a few partners said they never thought about what their strengths were. 1) *I have had a skill in gardening and cooking. But I only used them at home and didn't think of using it as a business.* 2) *I was not sure which strengths and other assets I have. But I knew that I love working with people.* 3) *My talents and skills were the last thing I ever thought about. Now, I am aware of my assets and know how to use them in a good way, I also learnt how to mobilise assets.* 4) *I have had a skill of hairstyling but I was unable to make use of it as a business. Hairstyling, this is what I am using now to raise income.*



Picture 2: Human Assets – Subcategories (n=5)

After the training, a few of our Siya Sonke partners decided to upgrade some of their skills through the social assets which are locally available: 12 partners attended permaculture training by Umthathi. Two partners connected with Egazini Outreach Project to improve their beadwork and to learn how to do fabric printing. There have been also further training and studies such as ECD Level 4, Tourism (Eastern Cape Midlands College) and BA in Education (Rhodes University). All of these came along with aspirations ('visions') which were developed during first couple of family visits two years ago and were an element of 'Low Hanging Fruits' ('easy to reach goals'). Visions of people are for example: 1) writing poetry and short stories for children, 2) doing painting (art), 3) opening a tuck shop, 4) hair salon, 5) running a fashion shop/ boutique, 6) community garden, 7) African restaurant, 8) farming chicken, 9) selling organic soaps, 10) a craft shop, 11) carpentry which offers training and employment to youth, 12) welding and plumbing workshop which offers training and employment to youth, and 13) expanding the pre-school. Many of our partners measured the section of 'Motivation/ Vision' which refers to having perspectives and being active about them with 4 or with 5 scores: *ABCD was life-changing to me as it inspired me to plant and sell veggies. ... I am looking forward to linking my gardening with catering to start up a catering business.*

The asset-inventory called the 'The Leaky Bucket' which is a budgeting tool, is most very frequently referred to during the assessments. It was applied to save money in the families but also to build their business. Further recurring valued changes picked up during conversations were: working with other people, mobilising assets and planning: 1) *Through ABCD I learned how to budget and plan for the future.* 2) *The ABCD training was an eye-opener to me. Now, I am able to budget and save money.* 3) *The ABCD training has motivated me when I already lost hope about running a day-care. I now know how to mobilise assets for the day-care.*

ABCD training of further adult family members but also the social networks of our partners seem to improve 'language' and common understanding of the paradigm in houses and social environment. Also, according to conversations, the children and youth programme has added to 'ABCD language' within the family (Sub-category 'ABCD Knowledge and Skills').

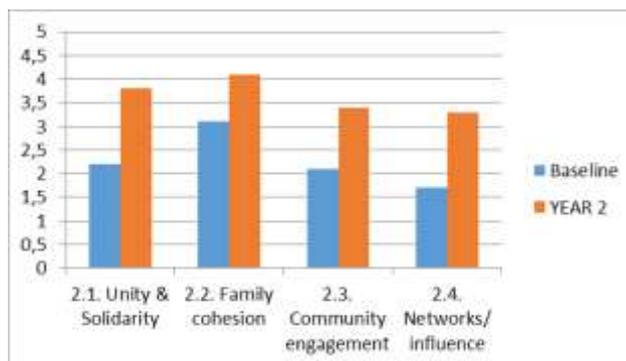
Conclusion:

Human assets are about self-acknowledgement, awareness about own strengths as well as recognising skills, talents and knowledge as a resource which add value to someone's circumstances. We saw that it was common to relate own potential to 'marketable skills' which are usually measured by matric and professional skills. This might have contributed to people not seeing perspectives, feeling helpless about their circumstances and therefore focusing primarily in what enabled economic survival. The majority of our partners were trying to live from seasonal jobs and/ or providing for the family through welfare grants. Therefore, consciousness building work (ABCD training as developed by Ikhala Trust and Elamanzi) has been

the most important and powerful first step to unlock life-giving processes among our partners. Taking stock of strengths (assets) and stories of success were what primarily inspired aspirations among people. The increases as depicted under both 'Motivation' and 'positive thinking' are indicating to us that people are getting out of 'despondency' cycles. Also, we relate to it an awareness of what self-limiting thinking is (in the training we call it 'poverty mindsets') and being able to see beyond self-limitations. We are convinced that this came with acknowledging and appreciating skills, but also through the feeling of empowerment which was generated by having a plan and knowing which assets are in reach. Besides, these new perspectives, as well as the experience made when reaching first 'Low Hanging Fruits' (first goals), have helped and re-motivated our partners to proceed further.

3.2 Social Assets:

Most Siya Sonke partners said that they always had strong bonds with family, friends and their church groups. Higher ratings in REP-1 were mostly related to the support they received from their families for their new activities. However, most of our partners reflected that they felt there was otherwise not much unity/ solidarity felt within the social environment beyond their family ties, two years ago: *The only people I was close to were those I was attending ECD Level-1 together with. And, they did not find that there was a need to share some knowledge and information. Each ECD practitioner was doing their own thing. [After the training,] the ECD Forum and DPSA [Disabled*



Picture 2: Social Assets – Subcategories (n=5)

People South Africa] were the once I thought I should network with and it opened a great platform to build strong working relationships. Also, working closely with Kuyasa Special School helped me to gather experience and to receive some skills. We have had a few more conversations where people shared that they have networked with others for learning experiences and for training. They were Umthathi Training for permaculture, Egazini Outreach Project for crafting skills as well as CSD (Rhodes University) for Early Childhood Development (ECD) and others. For example, one woman linked with the local Sonkie farm to learn how to grow chickens. Her vision has been to run a small poultry business from her yard at home – to augment the stipend she receives from her job at a pre-school. In the meantime, her poultry business is growing and she says that she feels very supported by community members who buy meat and eggs from her. A few other partners who are small producers and selling their products have valued the support which they have received from their neighbours or church group members: *I am an active member of my church and have gained more support from other church members for my work. They ordered church uniforms.* Rhodes University Community Engagement (RUCE), Umthathi and CWP have been important assets for activity support through donating material (seedlings and toys) or borrowing gardening tools.

The engagement with like-minded people and groups became a strong trend in the last two years. People started attending, joining community groups and reaching out to new nearby social assets. In many cases they connected with others who do similar work, such as Art Forum, Sakhuluntu group, DPSA and some more women joined the ECD Forum: *Before ABCD training, I was not aware how to mobilise assets and do proper networking. But, now I am working closely with other people who are doing the same work.* 20 Siya Sonke partners decided to form five entrepreneurial groups. They are: Catering, ECD, Craft Work, Small Trading Business, and Farming. They have been active and helped each other with rotating some tools for their work, discussing how to push some skills, making sure that individual members do not compete but complement one another and so far, one group which are the farmers, looks at possibilities to form an official entity. 13 out of 35 Siya Sonke partners joined the local Peace Builder initiative which is working closely with the local Police Forum. *I have built strong relationships with my neighbours through Peace-Builders. We want to fight crime in our area.* Quite a few started volunteering to share their skills such as: coaching children in soccer during school holidays, teaching school children poetry (they said that they are working closely with schools and pre-schools in their area) as well as teaching beadwork and sewing to people with special needs.

Conclusion:

People appreciated working in groups during the ABCD training. And, after the training, our partners started actively connecting with like-minded people. Partly, they were identified through social asset inventories and mapping but were also inspired by the engagement of others. Groups have been important for re-assurance, re-encouragement, for the feeling of being strong, resourcefulness and for staying active (energising). We think that the feeling of unity and solidarity has kept motivation and positive thinking (see above) flowing. In contradiction to the rather competitive and therefore atomizing capitalist economy, ABCD has reminded people of the value of collective power through which also comes more safety.

3.3 Natural Assets**Findings:**

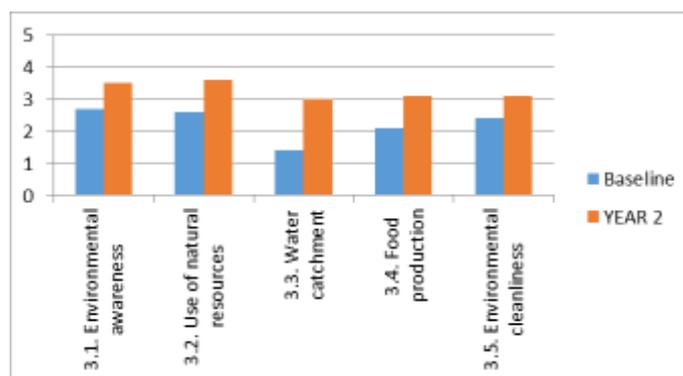
Many of our partners mentioned to always having gathered wood for fire in winter, some use natural herbs for remedies and collect grass for feeding life stock (cows and goats). *I am in collecting firewood for cooking and making my house warm in Winter. Also, I collect herbs and sometimes plant them for family medication - for example, Aloe.* A few of our partners always had life-stock and three women said that they always have had food gardens for own use but not for business. Quite a few people started using the space around the house for food

gardens after the training. For example, one of our partners said that in the past, she never thought about using her space around the house for food production. In the meantime, she runs a poultry business from her garden and grows veggies. Very few said that they use the land to grow herbs for medicine. A few people mentioned producing compost now: *I never thought of using my home space for food production but now I have a JoJo tank to collect rainwater and I recycle food waste for compost for my garden.* 12 people attended perma-culture training with Umthathi and one third (re-) established a food garden after the training. 1) *There was no one to start up a food garden at my home as I am staying with my grandmother and mother. I managed to call in a family friend to assist us to develop a small garden and my grandmother and I are the ones who look after it now.* 2) *I have a garden at home and I am using it more special after the Umthathi Training of permaculture.*

In all cases, people use the garden produce for cooking at home and two ECD members said that they also use the veggies for making lunch at their pre-schools. The Economic Assets category below shows that the savings have had a substantial increase. Quite a few people who run food gardens now said that they sell the vegetables and keep the intake for savings. For example: *I used to spend not much time in my garden because I had no material to look after it. [Now,] I look after my garden well now because it provides a lot for my family.* [She said that, after ABCD training, she borrowed equipment from CWP and started off with seedlings from Umthathi. She is now selling vegetables to buy some sewing materials. After ABCD she learned how to do sewing. Her vision is to sell clothes and someday to have a clothing shop].

‘Water catchment’ which refers to collecting and storing clean water (e.g. rain water) and re-using grey water had the biggest increase among the natural assets, in the last two years. Half of our Siya Sonke partners mentioned that they try to catch rainwater with JoJo tanks and other containers. The water was used for the garden but also for the household. As mentioned above, during the time of the assessment, we had a severe water crisis in Makhanda. Communities were left without water for almost 6 weeks. But also before the drought, our town lost Amatola who was the Municipal water supplier because our Municipality had built tremendous debts with the supplier. This led to a situation where the Municipality cleaned the Municipal water with insufficient and limited resources. Catching rainwater has become an essential strategy for self-reliance among local residents.

However, only a few said that they don’t use the land around their homes. Reasons for this were not having enough time to look after it or not having enough space. There were a few voices who mentioned with



Picture 3: Natural Assets – Subcategories (n=5)

concern the increasing mess in their gardens caused by air-borne waste from the nearby illegal dump-sites.

Conclusion

The use of natural resources has been a practical integral part of daily life for most of our partners. However, regarding natural resources as something which adds value to your current circumstances or plans seemed to have picked up with the ABCD training. Many partners felt encouraged to start vegetable and herbal gardens. However, it is interesting to see that there was a huge up-take in people attending perma-culture training with Umthathi and gardening at homes, but self-assessment of use of natural resources and food production was relatively 'modest' in comparison to water catchment. We had some individual decreases (rating went lower) among food producers during REP-1. This might be due to the water crisis we had - especially among those who do not have JoJo tanks to catch rainwater to an extent where it can provide for household and garden consumption. Yet, environmental health remains an important point to perhaps re-emphasise. People have been mentioning illegal dump-sites in their area. Some have volunteered at pre-schools to make sure the yards are free of waste. There was a small clean up initiative by our Siya Sonke partners in 2017 who met with the Grahamstown Residence Association to approach the Ward Councillors and draw up an activity plan. But this did not reflect in the assessment, probably because this little initiative faded out.

Self-reliance in accessing clean water remains a critical factor due to the circumstances that the Eastern Cape will experience more aridity but also because our Municipality currently has a run-down infrastructure.

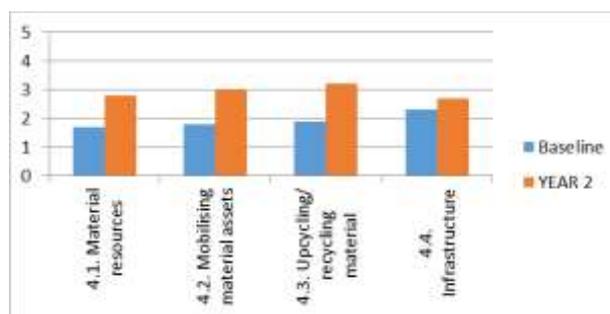
3.4 Material Assets

Findings:

The baseline average scoring with reference to the availability of material assets was 1,7, two years ago and increased by 22% in REP-1: 1) *Many times I felt like giving up running a pre-school because of the unavailability of resources...Before ABCD Training I was not aware of how to mobilise assets and do proper networking but now I am working closely with other people who are doing the same work. /I did not have enough resources for planting. I have some tools and material for gardening but most of the time we share the tools with one*

another. They were donated to our farming group by Dep. of Agriculture last year. [She has used money that she makes through savings to buy material resources for gardening). One of the crafters who has a small sewing business today said: *I was hand sewing [...] Now, I have a small sewing machine that I am using but I am looking forward to saving some money for a locker machine that is bigger. People who are bringing in orders bring their own fabric so then I charge for designing and labour.* [She also uses off-cut materials in the meantime]. The category of up-cycling and recycling material assets had the biggest increase (26%) among the material assets within the last two years. *Through collecting wood and recycling old furniture I was able to have some work material.*

After the training, all of the crafters made a start by using their homes - turning parts of it into workshops. One young woman used kitchen tools (baking forms for small cakes or biscuits) to produce aloe-soaps. During the last two years, people started making use of their social networks to rotate and/ or borrow material. Mobilising assets had the second highest increase (24%). *I did not have enough resources for planting. [Now,] I have some tools and material for gardening but most of the time we [the farming group] share the tools with one another. They were donated to our farming group by Dep. of Agriculture last year.* [She has used money that she makes through savings to buy material resources for garden]. However, especially the partners who are producing and selling in the meantime mentioned that they miss infrastructure to market their products. Some said that they are looking for venues such as a shop to sell clothes, shop to sell vaseline, a stall to sell cow milk, chickens and vegetables. A few of women are savings for a fast-food container.



Picture 4: Material Assets – Subcategories (n=5)

Conclusion:

The approach 'start by using what you have' has had a big impact in a way that people came to realise resources which they currently have but also can mobilise through their social networks. Our partners used these and could take essential steps forward. We have seen that all of our Siya Sonke partners - especially those who regarded themselves as resourceless in the beginning, have shifted perspective here: increases in availability and accessibility to and mobilising material assets indicating a trend which might seem small in comparison to the accumulation of human and social assets but people started moving. Asset inventories have been 'eye openers' and up-cycling and recycling material has become the most impactful tool to mobilise assets. Another important gateway to material resources came through knowing and accessing social networks. Very few were donated, and most were borrowed, shared or exchanged (see increases in 'bartering' below). The material assets of one *group* are far more than those of *just one person*. This was emphasised already in the training two years ago.

However, infrastructure remains a critical factor which depends on external forces (bigger systems) to a great extent. There are some ways to influence them (such as voting and initiatives) but a possible direct impact only will take much more time.

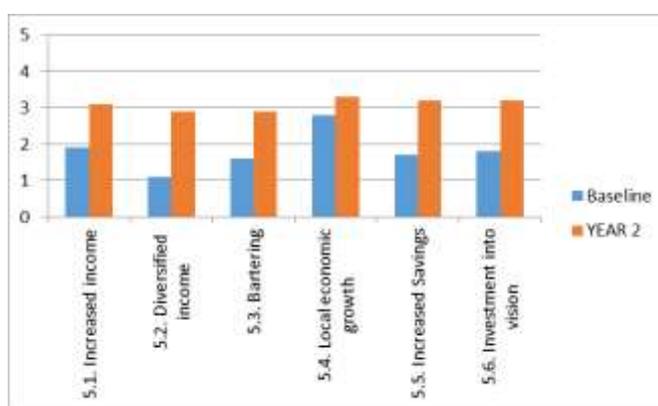
3.5 Economic Assets**Findings:**

In the beginning, most of our partners were relying on social grants and/ or seasonal jobs and hardly saw themselves as being able to generate income (the average scoring in the Baseline was 1,7). Quite a few mentioned that they were desperately trying to find a job. Some were able to get seasonal jobs, such as harvesting on the local chilli farm during fall, only: 1) *My focus used to be getting a stable job, so I grabbed any opportunity.* 2) *I depended on the disability grant for my daughter.* This situation has changed already - with a trend which shows an increase of almost a quarter. In the meantime, most

people improve their income through own small businesses. This also applies to most of our partners who receive stipends, such as from CWP or ECD and in addition, are running their little business on the side: *I used to have casual jobs and sold small items such as chips, sweets and lollies... Now, I started a reliable sewing business for myself. In the past 12 months business was going well.* 2) *All I ever could think of was to find proper employment.* [She mentioned that she depended on small amounts she received from casual jobs which were not enough for savings. Now, when she makes furniture repairs for her neighbours she charges a fee. Last year, she estimated, she was able to make an income of R12.000 (R3500 through chair order from Wesley Church and another R8500 through orders by community members).] 3) *I had no source for cash inflows and fully depended on my parents for everything. With hairstyling, I raise some money now. Also, I managed to get funding from NSFAS to pay for my studies.* 4) *I have had a sewing skill before ABCD training but was not sure how to use it... Then, I started sewing and repairing other people's clothes in order to have a cash inflow.*

The scoring of 'Diversified Income' has more than doubled in the last two years. As mentioned above, this was mainly because people started their own income generation in addition to receiving social grants, or in addition to stipends from ECD sites or CWP: *I get a stipend from Siyazama Pre-school but it was not enough for living. So, I also started a catering company in order to generate some more income.* Our partners produce and sell veggies, chicken meat and eggs, clothes, beadwork and paintings or provide services like hair-styling or catering.

Another relevant income was sourced through savings. The scoring for savings has nearly doubled in the last two years. More than half of the entire Siya Sonke group attends Save-Act groups now. We have had many comments about how much people appreciated the Leaky Bucket and were able through this to elaborate on different ways for saving. Some people managed to 'plug leaks' through spending less on goods which they felt were rather wasted. But also small trading of own produce or snacks and parts of stipends were used. Savings



Picture 5: Material Assets – Subcategories (n=5)

generated intake through interest which was shared among members of Save-Act groups. Many partners said that their savings serve as an investment into their future plans: *The income from veggie sell I use for savings, my savings I try to use to extend the veggie garden.* [In the meantime she extended the garden and saves for catering material now.]

The future plans in which people have had invested range from practical things such as a bigger sewing machine, extending the vegetable garden, catering equipment, purchasing material for beadwork and clothes making, to further plans such as: small day-care, building a carpentry workshop, a small tuck-shop, saving for IT studies, BA studies in Education or growing for the poultry business. Here, people saved or purchased materials intakes which they have had in the meantime: 1) *I will continue selling my veggies. From this, I will use some money to buy chickens so that I can start selling them.* [She is growing her poultry business]. 2) *I didn't use to have enough money for investing.* [Through furniture repairs she managed to start saving for her carpentry studio].

All of our partners who produce are trading them in the community ('Local Economy'). However, we do not have much information about in which ways people also support other local business, so far.

Conclusion:

Income in households has started increasing - mainly through diversifying income or through attending Save-Act groups (interest made through the groups). Quite a few partners still attend seasonal jobs in addition to their new tradings. Quite a lot found a small job under CWP. But we feel that the latter might not be sustainable since CWP will only exist as long as there is budget for it. However, to most of our partners, the stipend has been helpful to invest in materials which they have used to work on their aspirations. The budgeting tool 'Leaky Bucket' has been an important instrument for people to do savings. We assume that the good accessibility to Save-Act groups and trainings through the Assumption Development Centre have had an important role to play. We also have to say that we encouraged Save-Act groups because we had a good introduction to this ourselves and found it a solid activity to engage with. From experience, we know that savings from saving groups are often needed for the season. However, we assume from evidence seen above that people's aspirations and future plans might have been a big motivator for savings too.

Finally, we need to admit that we underestimated the trading (economic activities) in Joza community – the scoring in the Baseline is medium level but also more or less remained at medium level in REP-1. However, this also means that these are good conditions which need to be better understood in order to be built upon.

4. Reflection

She has a skill of woodwork but she never thought of using it for a living. So, she fixed her furniture at home and did carpentry as a hobby. She felt she was too much of a competition to men and therefore felt unable to show her carpentry skills publically. "Now I am using it to reach my vision which is having a carpentry. Within a year after ABCD and using my carpentry skills I was able to make cash inflow. Also, the ABCD training made me aware that there should be nothing you want to do without involving your community members too". Her church members and neighbours have been supporting her carpentry. For example, she received orders for chairs from Wesley Church and some other furniture orders by community members. Part of her vision is to have a carpentry workshop, teaching to youth woodwork and being able to employ some of them.

In ABCD, we always stipulate that change needs to start from within (within a person/ within a community) first. Our findings have re-emphasised this important dynamic which can be related to ABCD training, practice and first small successes. In the last two years, all of the Siya Sonke partners have had growth in a multitude of assets. Here, consciousness-building has been the most important and powerful first step to unlock and unblock people-driven processes among our partners (*Human Asset*). Strength-based paradigm and practice stimulated confidence, inspired and has been empowering (knowing what your skills are, having a plan for how to make use of it). Asset-inventories have helped to realize which resources are available and nearby, they also assisted in identifying opportunities for how and where to mobilise further assets. Another essential attribute of Asset-based Citizen-driven Development is the *Social Assets* which refer to the importance of unity, solidarity, togetherness, sharing assets, having access to a broader range of other forms of assets (Social

Capital). Human and Social assets are the important ingredients for *people-driven* processes and have been the necessary generators of accumulation of any other forms of assets. Our findings have shown that in both categories the increases have been dramatic and already have had a positive impact on the use of natural assets, as well as material and economic resources.

In the following we will reflect on findings against the following project aims: 1) Social Cohesion and 2) increased Economic Participation and Independence.

4.1 Siya Sonke Aim - Social Cohesion

The goal is to see more sustainable community groups and initiatives in our area. The conditions which could indicate this trend we have defined as ‘supportive networks & communal projects’ whereby people join or form citizen-driven groups to work toward a common goal. It encourages people to assist one another with assets or teaching each other skills:

Indicator	Asset-category	Baseline Scoring (n=5)	REP-1 (n=5)	Trend
	Unity & Solidarity (for both indicators):	2.2	3.8	+ 32%
People join/ form citizen-driven groups (with common goal)	Community-Engagement:	2.1	3.4	+ 26%
People assist each other with assets or teaching each other skills	Networks/ Influence:	1.7	3.3	+ 32%

Connecting with, joining or forming supportive networks with like-minded people and groups had a dramatic increase and became a strong trend in the last two years. Findings show that in many cases our partners connected with others who do similar work (ECD Forum, Sakhuluntu, Art Forum, ANC Youth League, entrepreneurial groups), share similar interests for advocacy (e.g. for people with special needs, or fighting crime in neighbourhoods) or for teaching others skills (volunteering to teach poetry, story-telling, sewing and beadwork) learning (Sonkie Farm, Khuyasa School, CSD, Umthathi, Egazini Outreach Project), for support (RUCE and Umthathi).

Unity and solidarity and Network/ Influence both had the highest increase among all social assets. Especially the first three (similar work, similar interest and advocacy, volunteering) have had an important impact on ‘Networks and Influence’ (the measure nearly doubled).

Social networks and human relationships have emancipatory effects and are powerful for belonging, resilience, confidence, and motivation. The essence of working in teams and the emphasis on unity, solidarity was emphasized in training two years ago and during family visits in the aftermath. Leadership has been an important topic in the ABCD course but also is relevant and remains an essential part of living after the training (‘ABCD in practice’). And, it is the crucial ingredient for transformation. In the training, we spoke about ‘Leadership’ and ‘Ripple Effects’. There is the saying that leadership today is not about positions or flow charts anymore but about one life influencing another. *Networks/ Influence* which referred to the effects of ‘inspiring others’ or ‘to have a positive influence on other people’s lives’ has had such a dramatic increase so that it nearly doubled. One can see that this has been due to the huge uptake of networking with other people. In particular, this happened in correlation with advocacy for change in specific areas (for rights of people who have special needs and for fighting crime and violence) and when people started volunteering to share their knowledge and skills with others.

However, an important field of influence which is not yet really reflected during the assessment are ‘ripple effects’ - meaning inspiring others *through own change*.

Recommendation:

We intend to nurture platforms for inspiration and knowledge-sharing over the next two years. The most powerful tool to facilitate this are stories of success. Last year, we started sharing 'Siya Sonke story of the term' through our newsletters and we had the Siya Sonke ABCD Festival. Usually, the newsletters have gone to our organisational partners, such as funders, Board and institutions and organisations we work with. But news like this need to be circulated in the community too. We are thinking of a specific term newsletter in isi-Xhosa which is distributed at local places in Joza, such as Assumption Development Centre and Joza Youth Hub and given to our Siya Sonke partners. Also, with community events such as Women's Day, another ABCD Festivals and Youth Dialogues we are aiming at 'knowledge sharing' and inspiration through stories of success.

Thanks to the Ikhala Trust, we are able to facilitate Organisational Development (OD) training which includes basic skills for people to organise themselves for any type of common goal – this can be 'making profit' such as among the entrepreneurial groups or for 'bringing about change' within a specific area of concern (e.g. women's rights, children's rights, youth well-being, fighting crime). The OD training will help to re-emphasise the power of unity and facilitates practical tools to plan and formalize collectives which are strength-based.

4.2 Siya Sonke - Aim: Increased Economic Independence and Participation

The goals to reach this aim are: 1) to see people growing a multitude of assets, and 2) increased self-sufficiency. Factors which could indicate are: 1) People are aware of assets and invest into them, 2) People have development plans, 3) Family income diversifies, 4) Family income, savings and investment increase.

According to the finding we could reach so far:

Indicator	Asset-category	Baseline Scoring (n=5)	REP-1 (n=5)	Trend
People are aware of assets and invest in them	Asset Appreciation:	2.5	4.4	+ 38 %
	Material Resources:	1.7	2.8	+ 22%
	Mobilising Material Assets:	1.8	3.0	+ 24%
	Recycling/ Up-cycling Material Assets:	1.9	3.2	+ 26%
People have development plans	Motivation/ Vision:	2.1	4.0	+ 38%
Family income diversifies	Diversified Income:	1.1	2.9	+ 36%
Family income, savings and investment increase	Increased Income:	1.9	3.1	+ 24%
	Increased Savings:	1.7	3.2	+ 30%
	Investment into Vision:	1.8	3.2	+ 28%

Findings on *page-3* show that people accumulated resources within a multitude of assets. Self-sufficiency reflected directly in sub-categories such as the uptake in 'water gathering and storage' (+32%) and growth in the field of 'food-production' (+20%). Indirectly, 'diversifying income' has contributed to this goal too. Instead of relying on one source of income only the majority of our partners have at least two or three different ways to generate cash inflows. They are, next to grants, stipends, interest from saving groups as well as intakes from selling own products or providing services, such as catering or hairstyling. This has assisted most of our

partners to re-invest into their future plans. Also, diversified income has helped to grow family income. Family income improved with an average increase in cash of about R380. Income growth has contributed to being able to keep money aside for savings. 'Increased Savings' has nearly doubled in the last two years. As mentioned on *page-8* another facilitator for savings was the budgeting tool 'Leaky Bucket' which assisted in identifying which expenditures can be reduced.

The findings of sub-categories such as 'asset-appreciation' (*page-4*), 'material resources', 'mobilizing material assets', and 'upcycling and recycling material assets' (*page-7*) especially show direct links to the indicator of 'People are aware of assets and invest into them'. Findings on *page-4* show that 'people having development plans' is related to the growth within the sub-category 'Vision and motivation' where our partners referred to their future plans, spoke about their first goals ('Low Hanging Fruits') which have been directly linked to plans of action to achieve them. This sub-category has nearly doubled within the last two years.

ABCD paradigm which emphasizes: 'Use what you have and build from what you know' has uncovered resources which were hidden and unblocked opportunities. Our partners set themselves goals and developed plans of action based on this. Because people start with 'easy to reach' goals (easy to reach because they use and mobilise available assets) they build bargaining power (leverage) without much or any outside help and re-invest and build from there. We believe that this is the most important element of a sustainable process. However, we also believe and could confirm through our findings that such processes take time to unfold. Yet, with relevance to sustainability, we are convinced that these processes *need* to take time in order to last and continue flowing.

Recommendations:

It was interesting to realize that we underestimated local economic activities in Joza community. It was already rated above medium level but more or less remained there (see sub-category 'Local Economic Growth' on *page-8*). However, for us, this means that we need to understand more about it in order to build from here. Perhaps, a start for this would be to look at local market chains together with the five entrepreneurial groups to elaborate on enabling a better infrastructure for marketing services and products. The Organisational Development training to which we intend to invite the groups can then build on these findings.

It appears that a lot of people are trying to run similar trades. But, once we have understood better local economic activities and therefore came to a clearer idea for marketing and selling we can better identify where people should consider forming collectives such as co-ops.

Finally, we value the work under CWP as a temporary solution because we can see that it contributes to increases in family income and savings. However, we do think that this is not a sustainable answer for the reasons as mentioned on *page-9* (conclusion). Diversifying income has the potential to contribute toward more economic independence because people don't rely on just one but still have other income sources in case one of them falls away. We think, we need to nurture this area more but have to think about the 'how' in consultation with the Siya Sonke partners.

5. Way Forward

The new asset-assessment and analytic framework tool which was introduced by the Ikhala Trust has been an invaluable asset to us for Monitoring and Evaluation of our work. Because it allows Siya Sonke partners and us to track asset-accumulation but also helps to identify and prioritise the next work foci. Based on this, we produce annual progress reports in March/ April 2019 and 2020. Child and youth well-being will be assessed in July 2019 and 2020. The final report will be released in July 2021.

We have experienced ourselves that the strength-based paradigm needs nurturing, especially in the beginning as people are usually very motivated after the training. However, after a while, especially when there are not more people in the social environment who are 'speaking strength-based language', mindsets tend to fall back into deficit-based thinking. This is why the family visits once a term have been good and important. We have to

use events, such as ABCD Festival, Women's Day and media (newsletter) more to remind and set sparks for strength-based thinking, also among the social networks. Besides, we intend to continue ABCD training in social networks of our to increase the likelihood of ripple-effects and strength-based thinking and action among social environments.

As mentioned above, we intend to foster collectives this and next year. Even though many of our partners already have connected with or found their groups we would like to assist with strengthening the entrepreneurial groups (through Organisational Development and practical business skills), but also wish to see if there are not any further common interests. We planned to facilitate a three-day Women's Camp with the Siya Sonke partners to facilitate an opportunity to elaborate on this.

Assessment and Analysis

- 1) **Self-Assessment:** Picture 1 and Picture 2 show the ‘Partner Assessment Tool’ which was completed in conversation by each of our Siya Sonke partners retrospectively. Here, people tried to recall their circumstances before they started engaging with Siya Sonke and were exposed to ABCD. It was followed by the self-assessment of own conditions currently (February, March 2019). Each of the asset-categories was colour-coded by our partners. They used the red for ‘low’, yellow for ‘medium’ and green for ‘good’ condition. Also, people could employ ‘in between colours’, such as red to yellow (which became in the second step orange) and yellow to green (which became in the second step light green). Notes from conversations about each field were kept by the facilitator.
- 2) **Tracking Sheet:** Picture 3 shows the tracking sheet which was then completed by us for each partner. It shows colour coding, scoring and averages per asset category. The scoring for each color was: red = 1, orange = 2, yellow = 3, light green = 4, green = 5.
- 3) **Analysis:** The results were analysed for each individual. Subsequently, an overall assessment was done and graphs produced for the entire group. Out of the 35 families, we could reach 31 partners. Four of our partners were difficult to get hold off due to new employment out of town.

Picture 1

 PARTNER ASSESSMENT TOOL 					
– MEASURING AND VALUING CHANGE – (based on IKT Partner Assessment, Ikhala Trust, 2019)					
NAME OF PARTNER:			DATE: Pre-ABCD / post-ABCD		
PEOPLE PRESENT AND ROLE (S):					
HUMAN ASSETS	<i>I am aware of and value my skills and abilities</i>	<i>And, I learned new skills</i>	<i>My family and I have ABCD knowledge and skills</i>	<i>I am energised and motivated</i>	<i>I am a positive thinker & aware of mind poverties</i>
SOCIAL ASSETS	<i>I have good relationships</i>	<i>My family is united and I receive and give support</i>	<i>I do something for my community</i>	<i>I am inspiring other people</i>	<i>Cultural Assets</i>
NATURAL ASSETS	<i>I am appreciate and value nature</i>	<i>I use available land & other natural resources</i>	<i>I catch, store and preserve water</i>	<i>I grow own food/I have life stock</i>	<i>We live in a clean area</i>
PHYSICAL ASSETS	<i>I have material resources</i>	<i>I have grown my material resources</i>	<i>I recycle and/ or up-cycle material</i>	<i>We have access to adequate infrastructure</i>	
ECONOMIC ASSETS	<i>I am able to make money</i>	<i>I have different income sources</i>	<i>I exchange goods and/ or services</i>	<i>I buy or trade material resources in my community</i>	<i>I save money</i>
	<i>I invest (e.g. cash, savings) into future plans/ my vision</i>				

Key to colour coding: poor / low level ◆ medium / average level ◆ good / high level ◆ 'in between' ◆

Picture 2

FACILITATOR NOTES (comments, evidence, quotes etc)

HUMAN ASSETS	
SOCIAL ASSETS	
NATURAL ASSETS	
PHYSICAL ASSETS	
ECONOMIC ASSETS	
ADDITIONS	

For internal use:
 Type of Assessment: Baseline Follow-up visit # ____ Final Evaluation
 Date(s): _____

Picture 3

N. Duda

MEASURING AND VALUING CHANGE

- TRACKING SHEET -

INDICATOR		Date : Oct-17			Mar-19			REP2	Score	REP3	Score	REP4	Score	FINAL
		BASELINE	Score	Ave	REP1	Score	Ave							
HUMAN	1.1. Asset appreciation		3			5								
	1.2. New Skills		1			3								
	1.3. ABCD knowledge/ skills		3	2		5	4,2							
	1.4. Motivation/ Vision		2			5								
	1.5. Positive thinking		1			3								
SOCIAL	2.1. Unity & Solidarity		3			5								
	2.2 Family cohesion		4			5								
	2.3 Community Engagement		2	2,5		5	5							
	2.4 Network Influence		1			5								
	2.5. Cultural assets													
NATURAL	3.1. Environmental awareness		3			2								
	3.2. Use of natural resources		3			5								
	3.3. Water catchment/ usage		1	2,6		2	2,6							
	3.4. Food production		3			3								
	3.5. Enviromental cleanliness		3			1								
PHYSICAL	4.1. Material resources		1			2								
	4.2. Mobilising material assets		2			3								
	4.3. Upcycle/ recycle material		1	1,8		5	2,8							
	4.4. Infastructure		3			1								
ECONOMIC	5.1. Increased income		2			3								
	5.2. Diversified income		1			3								
	5.3. Bartering		1	2,2		2	3,5							
	5.4 Local economic growth		3			3								
	5.5. Increased savings		3			5								
	5.6. Investment into vision.		3			5								