Unpacking the Lived Realities of Western Cape Youth

Exploring the well-being of young people residing in five of the most deprived areas in the Western Cape Province

Ariane De Lannoy

With contributions from Alicia Fortuin, Tsitsi Mpofu-Mketwa, Gibson Mudiriza, Sonwabiso Ngcowa and Evelien Storme
Edited by Charmaine Smith

March 2018

POVERTY & INEQUALITY INITIATIVE

University of Cape Town

Western Cape Government
BETTER TOGETHER.

SALDRU
Southern Africa Labour and Development Research Unit

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Front cover picture: Western Cape Government

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ABBREVIATIONS

ATM	Automated Teller Machine
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
MPI	Multidimensional Poverty Index
NEET	Not in Education, Employment or Training
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisations
PII	Poverty and Inequality Initiative, University of Cape Town
PSET	Post-School Education and Training
PYDS	Provincial Youth Development Strategy
TB	Tuberculosis
TVET	Technical and Vocational Education and Training
WCG	Western Cape Government

LIST OF FIGURES

YOUTH WELL-BEING IN THE WESTERN CAPE PROVINCE: AN INTRODUCTION

Key points

- The data indicate the perpetual struggle of youth growing up in an impoverished environment, trying to find solutions to their problems.
- Poverty and so-called 'social ills' are clearly experienced as interconnected.
- Youth ask for support and interventions that would allow them to fulfill the aspirations they hold for themselves and their families.
- The findings corroborate other qualitative research with youth, going back as far as the 1990s. This indicates the limitations of post-apartheid policies and programmes to undo the damage and inequalities created in the past.

Too many conversations about young people focus only on their problems, not on helping them grow and develop. Even fewer programs and policies focus on engaging young people in their schools, organisations and communities.[1]

More recent youth development policies at the national, provincial and city levels have however been recognising the precarious situation many young South Africans find themselves in. They stress the need to intervene in several aspects of young people's lives, often strongly emphasising economic inclusion and empowerment, education, skills and training, health and social cohesion.[2] In the Western Cape, the Provincial Youth Development Strategy (PYDS) sets the goal that, 'by the age of 25, youth in the Western Cape are inspired, educated, responsible, independent, healthy and productive citizens with positive personal, family and social relations'. The Western Cape Government (WCG) aims to reach this goal by focusing on five pillars: family foundations; education and training; economic opportunity; identity and belonging; and reconnection opportunities. For each pillar, a range of programmes are designed and implemented; each of these programmes aims to reach between 100,000 to 400,000 youth, focusing on particular 'communities and geographic areas where youth have blighted life chances', and providing a differentiated approach for rural and urban youth.[3]

However, many of the existing policies draw on official statistics that point at the deficits in young people's lives. This tendency, albeit inadvertently, may lead to the de-personalisation of young people, the issues and topics they face. It also often results in a focus on the 'objective' aspects of well-being but overlooks the more 'subjective' areas of well-being: how young people feel generally, how safe or unsafe they experience life to be, their sense of life satisfaction, etc. As a result, general policy recommendations following a string of statistics may not be based on a complete understanding of young people's lived realities and tend to overlook their aspirations, dreams and agency. Yet, effective implementation of youth development policies requires a comprehensive understanding of young people's realities; their needs and dreams; their real or perceived support networks, or gaps in these; their level of access to services and their willingness to take these up; and their sense of happiness.

Aware of this need for a more comprehensive understanding, the WCG issued a call for a study that gathers, from young people's own viewpoints, a deeper understanding of their daily lives, including their aspirations, agency, and available support structures. The ultimate aim of this study was thus to begin to build a more nuanced body of evidence that could help inform the WCG's youth-related policies and interventions.

In conducting this work, it was important to avoid applying a 'blanket approach' to youth, as such an approach would mask the racial, gender and income inequalities that influence young people's lives and life chances. For instance, nationwide, African and Coloured youth are still far more likely to experience unemployment than White and Indian youth.[4] Young women are more likely to be represented amongst the unemployed; those who are not in education, employment or training (NEET); and those who are poor.[5] They are more vulnerable to contracting HIV[6]; to being the victims of sexual crime[7]; and to carrying the responsibility for child and family care in the household[8]. Income inequalities continue to influence the barriers that young people face in accessing quality basic education[9], higher education[10] and work[11]. Young people's socio-economic status, race, gender and their personal disposition provide for a myriad of experiences and outcomes that need to be acknowledged. As it is impossible to present a thorough understanding of all these different experiences in one study that was limited in scope and numbers. The WCG therefore requested a focus on some of the poorest wards in the province, and to include Black and Coloured[i] youth only, to allow for a focus on some the most vulnerable youth in the province.

The South African definition of youth is very broad as it includes those aged 15 to 34 years old.[12] While this broad age range is warranted for several reasons, a blanket approach to this group is again unhelpful, as policies and interventions aimed at a 15-year-old would need to focus on different issues than those targeting 34-year-olds. In recognition of the importance of thinking carefully about this age-based definition, the WCG specifically asked that this study limits the upper age to 24. In addition, also recognising the importance of adolescence, the WCG requested the definition be expanded downwards to include adolescents from 11 years onwards.

This distinction is crucial: the 'adolescent stage' (defined by the World Health Organisation [WHO] as anyone between 10 and 19 years), for instance, is the time in which children 'move toward social and economic independence, develop identity, and acquire skills needed to carry out adult relationships and roles. [...] it is a time of tremendous growth and potential but also of considerable risk during which social contexts exert powerful influences'.[13] It is internationally recognised as a critical stage for interventions that can lead to long-lasting change.[14] It is therefore important to pay particular attention to this younger cohort and to understand their individual, household and community contexts when conceptualising and implementing strategic interventions that could support them in their development and that can build resilience. Indeed, young people between 15 and 18 years are most at risk of dropping out of school, which severely limits their chances for further education and employment.

In addition, youth between 19 and 24 years, too, are at a key point in their transition, expected to move from schooling towards post-school education and training (PSET), work and possibly independent living and parenthood – for some, this might mean having to navigate both adolescence and the transition to adulthood at the same time. Enabling young people to navigate these transitions to adulthood in a well-supported manner is crucial if we wish to enhance their present and future well-being. In the current context of South African townships and informal settlements, these transitions are often constrained and disrupted by adverse economic and socio-cultural factors.[15]

Finally, then, the study also took care not to collapse the wide variety of youth experiences into one 'vulnerable' category. This would overlook the evidence on the agency and resilience of large numbers of young people attempting to generate pathways out of poverty for themselves.[16] For this reason, this report refers to the

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i   The research team is mindful of the sensitivity and controversy around the use of racial terms in South Africa, as these categorisations are social constructs introduced and maintained under the previous apartheid regime. It is, nevertheless, believed to be essential to recognise the historical constructs, as they continue to carry important social meanings, and explain many of the remaining inequalities in the country. We therefore use the terms 'Black' and 'Coloured' in similar ways as, for instance, Statistics South Africa does.

structural barriers to well-being that exist (and stubbornly persist) in the lives of young people and adds a focus on aspirations and agency within a context of deprivation.

The report consists of two distinct sections. First, it provides a statistical overview of available indicators on youth well-being, as defined collaboratively by the WCG and the Poverty and Inequality Initiative's (PII) researchers working on the Youth Explorer project.[ii] Secondly, based on voices of young people living in some of the more deprived areas of the Province, the report introduces an understanding of the subjective aspects of well-being.

The data indicate the truly perpetual struggle of youth growing up in an impoverished environment, trying to find solutions to their problems. Young people in the groups engaged in very serious and considered debate about the issues in their communities, and the drivers of those issues. Many challenges were raised, often with a clear understanding of the interconnectedness between poverty and 'social ills'. In all groups, there were very similar requests for support, to reach very similar kinds of aspirations. These indicate the areas where interventions are needed to enable these young people to create meaningful lives for themselves.

Importantly, the results corroborate a fairly extensive body of qualitative research that goes back as far as the 1990s and that provides examples of young people and their families attempting to mitigate the dire circumstances of their constrained and often risky environments.[17] The experiences of a life in deprivation in 2017 remain strikingly similar to those captured in young people's narratives over a period of more than 30 years. This is a painful indication of the limitations of post-apartheid policies and programmes to undo the damage and the inequalities created in the past. The current study aims to contribute insights that can begin to shift the pathways of many young people, for the better.

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ii   The PII is a multi-disciplinary strategic initiative of the University of Cape Town. It aims to increase UCT's collective con-tribution to tackling major development challenges facing South Africa. One key area of its work focuses on the impor-tance of the youth stage for interventions aimed at breaking the cycles of poverty. The youth research team is housed at the Southern Africa Labour and Development Research Unit (SALDRU). They developed a Youth Explorer: an online tool that maps indicators of youth well-being down to the small area level and makes these accessible to policy-makers and practitioners. Data restrictions have inevitably led those indicators to be more focused on the *objective* aspects of youth well-being.

METHODOLOGY

Key points

- The research approach was both quantitative (drawing on available data on WC youth, as collated on the Youth Explorer) and qualitative (10 focus group discussions – FGDs).

- A literature review of research with young people in the province provided historical context and allowed for validation of the FGDs data.

Indicators on youth well-being: an overview of Youth Explorer indicators

Indicators on youth well-being were constructed using Census 2011 data and mapped on the Youth Explorer portal.[iii] WC data were analysed to reflect which 'domains' of well-being would require urgent attention to realise the PYDS aims. Key findings are discussed in section 3, starting on page 12.

Subjective youth well-being and agency: gathering the voices of young people

Between April and July 2017, 10 FGDs were conducted with a total of 25 young men and 32 young women aged 11 – 24 years.[iv]

Youth Explorer data were used to determine the more deprived areas of the province and, on that basis, fieldwork areas were selected in the Breede Valley, Stellenbosch and the Cape Town Metropolitan municipalities. FGDs were conducted in three Black – predominantly isiXhosa-speaking – areas: Khayelitsha (urban, ward 89), Breede Valley (rural, ward 18) and Stellenbosch (rural, ward 2); and two Coloured – predominantly

Afrikaans speaking – areas: Mitchells Plain (urban, ward 82), and Bishop Lavis (urban, ward 24).

Participants were divided by gender (male/female), and into three age groups (young adolescents, 11 – 15 years of age; youth, 16 – 19-year-olds; and older youth, 20 – 24 years) to assist a greater understanding of their potentially very different needs, experiences and expectations. These separate gender groups were important to facilitate truly 'safe spaces' where youth could share as openly as possible their experiences and aspirations. FGD facilitators were matched to the participants according to the main language of the selected area (Afrikaans or isiXhosa), and, where possible, in terms of gender.

Challenges of the fieldwork and limitations of the data

The original goal was to conduct 12 FDGs across six areas (three rural and three urban): two gender groups per area, and across a range of age groups. However, by 20 July 2017, two groups with Coloured young people in a rural area remained outstanding and were eventually dropped from the sample (one male and one female group aged 20 – 24 years, in rural Breede Valley).

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iii https://youthexplorer.org.za. Youth Explorer indicators of youth well-being are based on the full 2011 national census dataset. While this is a slightly outdated dataset, it is the only available dataset that allows for representative data disaggregation for individual youth, down to the ward level. These were crucial criteria for the selection of a dataset to use to develop the range of Youth Explorer indicators. While the 2016 Community Survey (CS) provides more recent statistics, the publicly released CS dataset does not include income and employment data, nor can the CS data be disaggregated to the ward level. Quarterly Labour Force Survey data do contain income and labour market outcomes but are not comparable to the CS data. We therefore decided to include the 2011 census data here but provide more recent CS data where they are available.

iv All participants signed a consent form and were guaranteed confidentiality, as per the University of Cape Town's research ethics protocol.

Two aspects of the fieldwork proved especially difficult and eventually led to the reduction in the number of FGDs.

Firstly, gaining entry into each of the rural communities and then inviting youth from the poorest wards of those communities were both very difficult.

All the FGDs were organised with the help of local community or youth-oriented non-governmental organisations (NGOs). However, finding correct contact details of, and subsequently establishing collaborative *rapport* with organisations in more rural communities were difficult. Very few organisations that were contacted seemed to have the capacity, or the willingness, to reach youth in the poorest wards.

These difficulties eventually led to the exclusion of the two rural FGDs with Coloured youth, but are also, in themselves, very telling. If it was this hard for an academic institution, with resources and with support from government, to establish cooperative rapport with organisations, how much more difficult must it be for a young person from a deprived background, in a fairly isolated geographic area, to persist in reaching out to such organisations to access the kind of support he or she is looking for?

The second difficult aspect of the fieldwork concerned the FGD with young men aged 20 – 24 in Bishop Lavis. While local organisations helped to invite participants, and provided transport for participants to a calm and safe venue where food was arranged, this group had to be cancelled twice as none of the young men who had agreed to participate showed up.

The reasons for non-attendance are unclear. It may be that the young men were simply not all that interested, or that they were hesitant to respond to an invitation by a young female researcher (who was asked to conduct the groups due to clashes in availability of a male researcher). It could also indicate deeper lying issues with young men in this community, and their ability or willingness to open up and talk about themselves. In various communities, the need for counselling, 'especially for the guys', was raised by several participants. The reluctance to talk may thus also not be limited to young men in Bishop Lavis only.

Lastly, this study sample is small and almost inevitably biased. Participation was voluntary, although young people were offered a snack, transport money and a small (R30) supermarket voucher as a token of appreciation. Invitations with the help of local NGOs happened through a snowballing technique. This approach means that the study may have involved young people who are more 'connected' (already in touch with community resources), and who are probably more vocal, reflective, and less discouraged. Care should thus be taken not to present these data as representative of all youth in these communities, or in the province overall. However, this study does provide useful, in-depth insight into the lived experiences of particularly vulnerable youth in the Western Cape.

Literature review

The brief literature review of similar existing studies firstly gave some historical context to WC young people's life experiences and allowed us to distil, from their narratives, whether their experiences were improving or not. Secondly, previous data collected through similar methods and with similar sub-groups of the population allow us to check the reliability and validity of our own work.

Youth in Mitchells Plain – Ward 82

Category	Value	Description
Demographics	19%	total youth population
	96%	race – coloured
	49%	male
	51%	female
Education	34%	aged 20–24 have completed matric or higher
	26%	aged 16–17 deprived in education progress (less than grade 9)
	33%	male
	20%	female
	33%	average mean score in grade 9 systemic tests
	47%	average mean score in grade 9 English systemic test
	20%	average mean score in grade 9 maths systemic test
Poverty	50%	in income-poor households
	50%	male
	51%	female
	28%	multidimensionally poor
	0.13	MPI
Economic opportunities	26%	deprived in household adult employment
	30%	youth deprived of employment
	49%	deprived in NEET
	58%	youth unemployment rate
	54%	male
	61%	female
Family & living environment	1%	deprived in electricity
	2%	deprived in toilet facilities
	1%	deprived in piped water
	8%	deprived in internet access
	68%	deprived in dwelling type
	18%	deprived in living with parents
Health & Wellness	35%	female that have given birth to a child
	14%	age 16–19
	54%	age 20–24

Bishop Lavis – Ward 24

Stellenbosch – Ward 2

Mitchells Plain – Ward 82

Khayelitsha – Ward 89

Youth in Khayelitsha – Ward 89

Category	Value	Description
Demographics	21%	total youth population
	99%	race – coloured
	48%	male
	52%	female
Education	36%	aged 20–24 have completed matric or higher
	28%	aged 16–17 deprived in education progress (less than grade 9)
	34%	male
	22%	female
	33%	average mean score in grade 9 systemic tests
	40%	average mean score in grade 9 English systemic test
	26%	average mean score in grade 9 maths systemic test
Poverty	68%	in income poor households
	64%	male
	72%	female
	50%	multidimensionally poor
	0.26	MPI
Economic opportunities	36%	deprived in household adult employment
	30%	youth deprived of employment
	45%	deprived in NEET
	64%	youth unemployment rate
	57%	male
	70%	female
Family & Living environment	40%	deprived in electricity
	27%	deprived in toilet facilities
	3%	deprived in piped water
	76%	deprived in internet access
	64%	deprived in dwelling type
	35%	deprived in living with parents
Health & Wellness	32%	female that have given birth to a child
	13%	age 16–19
	45%	age 20–24

Youth in Bishop Lavis – Ward 24

Category	Value	Description
Demographics	19%	total youth population
	92%	race – coloured
	50%	male
	50%	female
Education	37%	aged 20–24 have completed matric or higher
	23%	aged 16–17 deprived in education progress (less than grade 9)
	30%	male
	17%	female
	33%	average mean score in grade 9 systemic tests
	48%	average mean score in grade 9 English systemic test
	19%	average mean score in grade 9 maths systemic test
Poverty	53%	in income poor households
	51%	male
	56%	female
	27%	multidimensionally poor
	0.13	MPI
Economic opportunities	25%	deprived in household adult employment
	22%	youth deprived of employment
	43%	deprived in NEET
	47%	youth unemployment rate
	45%	male
	51%	female
Family & Living environment	9%	deprived in electricity
	5%	deprived in toilet facilities
	1%	deprived in piped water
	20%	deprived in internet access
	65%	deprived in dwelling type
	23%	deprived in living with parents
Health & Wellness	31%	female that have given birth to a child
	12%	age 16–19
	48%	age 20–24

Figure 1: Geographic location of municipal wards included in the study and indicators on youth well-being for each ward

Cape Town

Breede Valley– Ward 18

Youth in Stellenbosch – Ward 2		
Demo-graphics	21%	total youth population
	63%	race – black
	51%	male
	49%	female
Education	27%	aged 20–24 have completed matric or higher
	40%	aged 16–17 deprived in education progress (less than grade 9)
	41%	male
	38%	female
	36%	average mean score in grade 9 systemic tests
	47%	average mean score in grade 9 English systemic test
	25%	average mean score in grade 9 maths systemic test
Poverty	57%	in income poor households
	51%	male
	63%	female
	50%	multidimensionally poor
	0.26	MPI
Economic opportunities	25%	deprived in household adult employment
	28%	youth deprived of employment
	44%	deprived in NEET
	48%	youth unemployment rate
	42%	male
	55%	female
Family & Living environment	17%	deprived in electricity
	6%	deprived in toilet facilities
	3%	deprived in piped water
	65%	deprived in internet access
	82%	deprived in dwelling type
	38%	deprived in living with parents
Health & Wellness	45%	female that have given birth to a child
	21%	age 16–19
	60%	age 20–24

Youth in Breede Valley – Ward 18		
Demo-graphics	19%	total youth population
	57%	race – coloured
	50%	male
	50%	female
Education	33%	aged 20–24 have completed matric or higher
	34%	aged 16–17 deprived in education progress (less than grade 9)
	42%	male
	27%	female
	27%	average mean score in grade 9 systemic tests
	36%	average mean score in grade 9 English systemic test
	17%	average mean score in grade 9 maths systemic test
Poverty	60%	in income poor households
	60%	male
	60%	female
	19%	multidimensionally poor
	0.10	MPI
Economic opportunities	19%	deprived in household adult employment
	11%	youth deprived of employment
	25%	deprived in NEET
	22%	youth unemployment rate
	19%	male
	24%	female
Family & Living environment	5%	deprived in electricity
	4%	deprived in toilet facilities
	2%	deprived in piped water
	11%	deprived in internet access
	65%	deprived in dwelling type
	30%	deprived in living with parents
Health & Wellness	35%	female that have given birth to a child
	18%	age 16–19
	53%	age 20–24

YOUTH WELL-BEING IN THE WESTERN CAPE: WHAT DO THE YOUTH EXPLORER DATA TELL US?

Key points

- Many young people struggle to finish secondary schooling; only 48% of youth aged 20 – 24 have completed matric or matric equivalent.

- Only 28% of 18 to 24-year-old WC youth attend college or university.

- Drop-out rates in WC Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) colleges are especially high as only about three out of five students who register for the National Certificate (Vocational) actually write the exam, while only 55% of them pass.

- The official unemployment rate for WC youth aged 15 – 24 was 41% in 2011. When discouraged work-seekers are included this rate increases to 52%.

- WC youth unemployment is highest for those without a matric and lowest for those with any tertiary education and training.

- Job search is facilitated by access to networks of people who already have a job. However, one in five WC youth (21%) live in households where no working-age adults are employed. In some townships or informal areas, this proportion increases to 30 – 40%.

- Interpersonal violence and road injuries were the top two causes of death among male youth (aged 15 – 24) between 2010 – 2013.

- HIV and TB were the leading causes of death among female youth of the same age during this period.

Youth are disproportionately affected by poverty

In 2011, the Western Cape had a population of 5 781 361 people[v], with 1 061 057 of those between the ages of 15 to 24. More than four out of 10 of these young people (44.5%) aged 15 – 24 lived in households with a per capita monthly income of less than R779 [the 'upper bound poverty line'[18]], compared to 33% of the adult population[19].

Income poverty continues to be strongly associated with race: 57% of African youth and 43% of Coloured youth live below the poverty line, compared to just over 4% of White young people.[20]

Many young people experience *multiple forms of deprivation* simultaneously, including low levels of education, poor health and limited access to housing, basic services and economic opportunities.[21] These vulnerabilities are often inter-related: for example, income poverty can compromise children's health, which, in turn, impacts on education and employment prospects.

The Youth Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI) is an index designed to capture the multiple deprivations experienced by young people.[22] It comprises 11 indicators on education, health, living environment and economic opportunities. Analyses of the 2011 Census data indicate that 22.8% of the youth aged 15 – 24 in the WC are multidimensionally

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v These numbers differ from the ones published by Statistics South Africa. This is because they exclude people in 'Institutions, Transient and Tourist hotels'. That exclusion was settled on after careful consideration of the different interview guides administered to that sub-population. In addition, the Community Survey 2016 Technical Report of Statistics South Africa (p. 9) clarifies that the CS 2016 also did not collect data for this sub-population. A correct comparison would thus only be possible between samples that both exclude the sub-population. Such a comparison reveals an increase in the total population of the WC to 6 279 730; the youth population increased to 1 062 917 in CS 2016.

poor.[23] However, there are stark differences across wards.

Figure 3 (p. 14), drawn from the Youth Explorer, highlights the spatial inequalities that persist within the youth cohort: multidimensional poverty rates range from under 10% in city and suburban wards (shaded light green) – eg, ward 59 in Cape Town's southern suburbs – to over 40% in parts of the south-eastern and northern areas of the province (wards shaded dark green) – eg, ward 2 in Breede Valley.

A breakdown of the MPI shows that educational attainment (46.3%) and NEET (20.1%) are the two largest contributors to multidimensional youth poverty in the WC. This indicates the urgency to intervene in ways that would improve young people's educational outcomes and connections to the labour market.[24]

Key challenges and opportunities for intervention

Understanding the multiple dimensions of poverty and how they interact is crucial for developing *comprehensive, transversal policies* that can support youth to break the vicious cycles of poverty. Various government line departments may, however, be interested in certain key indicators for their specific area of work. This section therefore provides an overview of those key indicators.

Schools

Nationally, access to education has improved significantly since 1994, but this has not resulted in increased employment. The poor quality of education in most public schools acts as a poverty trap. Poorer children in those schools very quickly fall behind, and such learning backlogs and grade repetition remain key drivers of school drop-out at a later age.[25]

The Youth Explorer data indicate that, in the WC province:

- Overall, 74.5% of youth aged 16 – 17 have completed grade 9 or higher.[vi] But there are certain areas where less than

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vi   2016 Community Survey data indicate that 80.4% of 16 to 17-year-olds had completed grade 9 or higher.

Figure 3: Incidence of multidimensional youth poverty, by ward, Census 2011
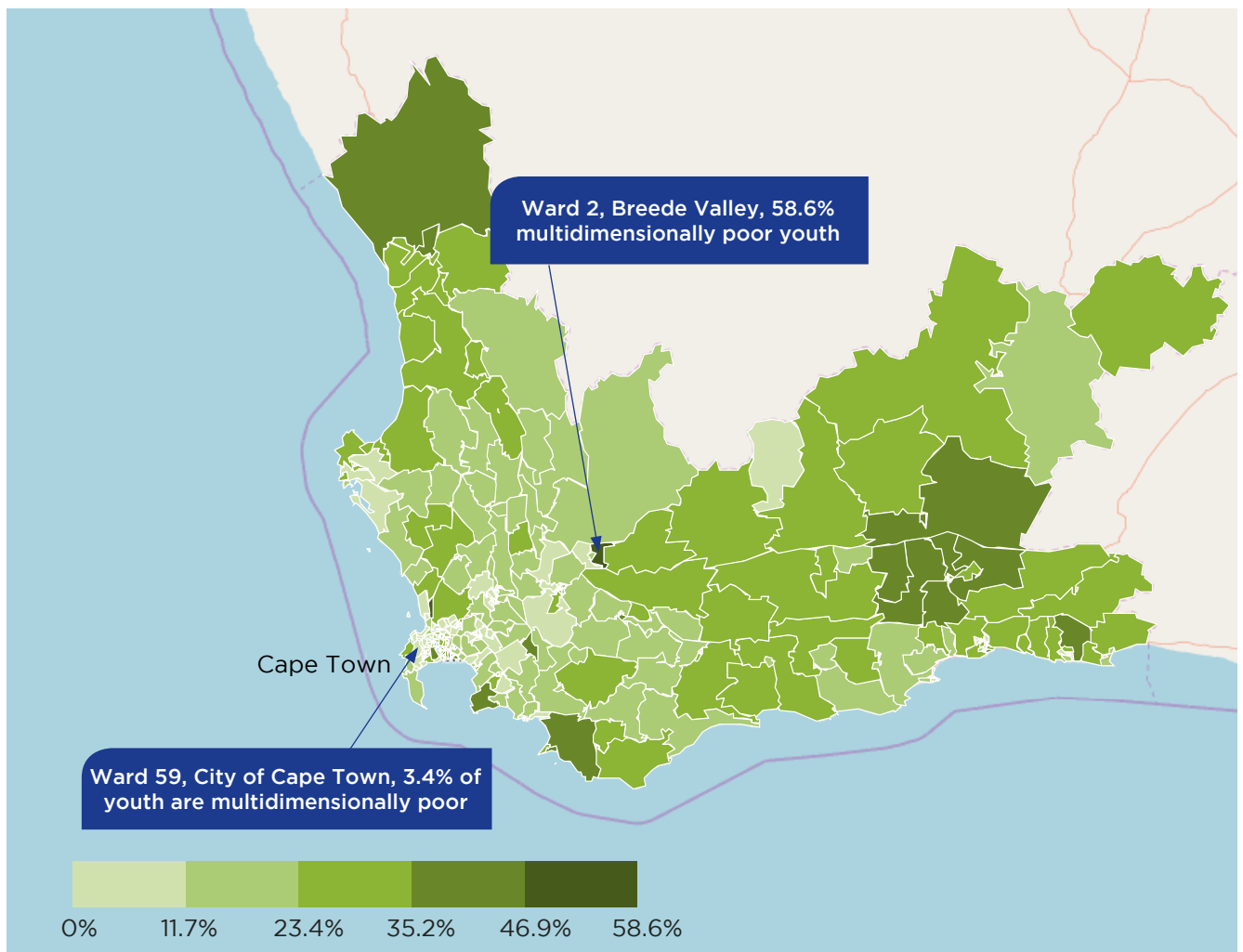
Ward 2, Breede Valley, 58.6% multidimensionally poor youth

Cape Town

Ward 59, City of Cape Town, 3.4% of youth are multidimensionally poor

| 0% | 11.7% | 23.4% | 35.2% | 46.9% | 58.6% |

55% reach this level (eg, Langeberg, and Bergrivier) - as indicated on Figure 4, p. 15.

- Many young people struggle to finish secondary schooling, and only 48% of youth aged 20 – 24 have completed matric or matric equivalent.[vii]

- Major learning deficits are *already* substantial by the time learners reach grade 9. Data on the education systemic evaluations, provided by the WC Department of Education, indicate that, in 2017, only 22% of all WC learners passed the mathematics test, with an average mark of 34%; and only 53% passed the language test, with an average mark of 51%.[26]

- There are extreme disparities at ward level in outcomes between learners attending school in affluent areas versus those attending schools in townships or informal settlements. For instance, only 7% of learners in the New Crossroads township passed the mathematics test in 2015, compared to 68.2% of learners attending school in the much wealthier suburb of Newlands.

Post-school education

A college or university qualification increases employment chances and earning potential; yet only 28% of WC youth aged 18 – 24 attend college or university.[viii] There are multiple reasons for this: many high-school learners lack access to information needed to make

vii   2016 Community Survey data indicate that 55.4% of 20 to 24-year-olds had completed matric or matric equivalent.
viii 2016 Community Survey data indicate that only 25.3% of 18 to 24-year-olds are attending college or university.

Figure 4: Youth aged 16 – 17 who have completed grade 9, by ward, Census 2011

Ward 6, Bergriver, 34.5% of youth aged 16 – 17 have completed grade 9

Ward 11, Langeberg , 47.8% of youth aged 16 – 17 have completed grade 9

Cape Town

34.5% 47.6% 60.7% 73.8% 86.9% 100%
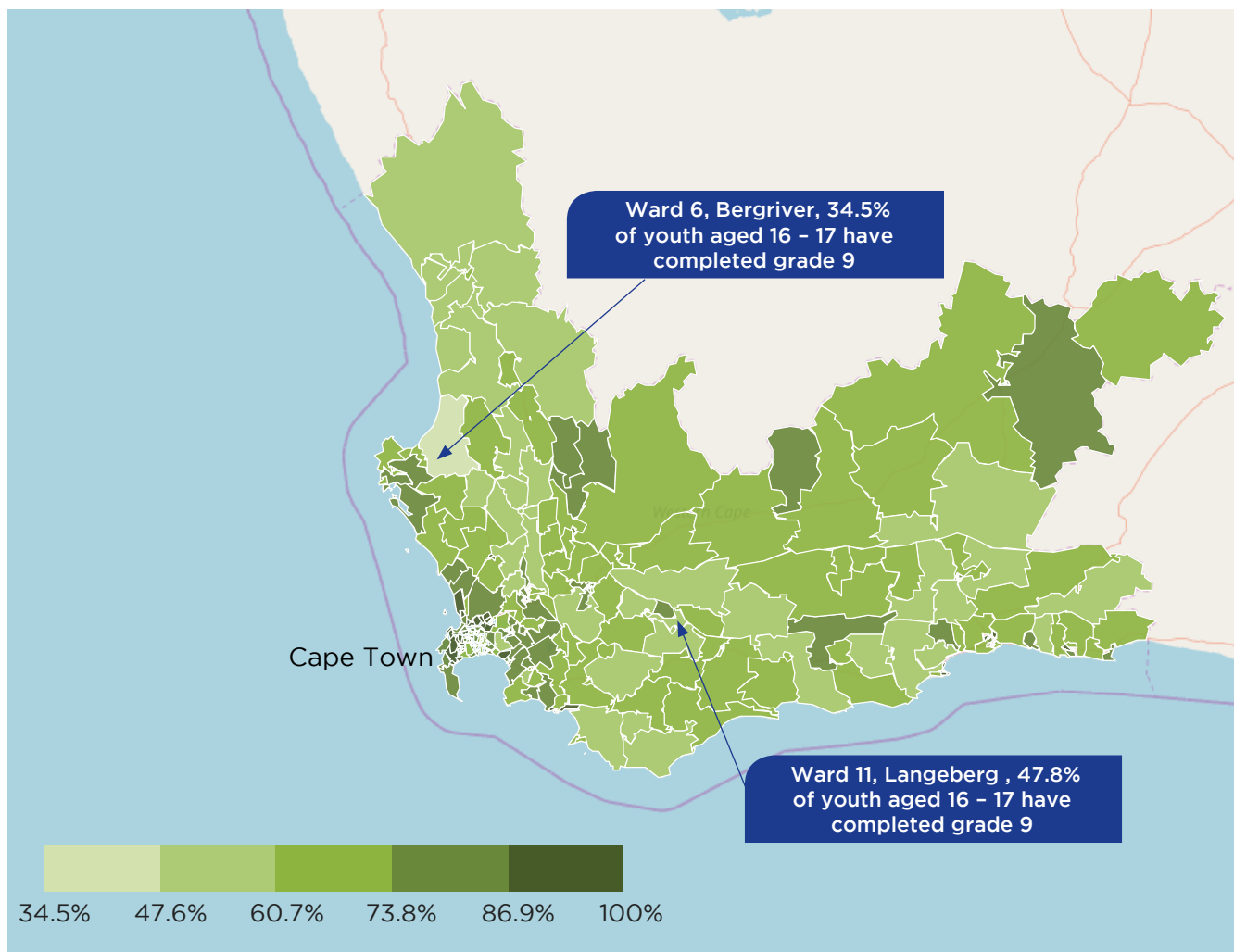
Source: Poverty and Inequality Initiative (2017) *Youth Explorer.* PII, SALDRU University of Cape Town. Access at: https://youthexplorer.org.za.

informed decisions about matric subjects or career paths;[27] each college and university has its own application requirements, making it difficult and costly for students to apply to more than one institution; tuition costs and other study-related expenses are high;[28,29] and many students refer to the institutional cultures as alienating and contributing to drop out. Another major barrier to post-school education is that the majority of learners either do not pass their matric exams or, if they do, do not qualify for entry in higher education.

Indeed, drop-out rates in WC (TVET) colleges are especially high: about three out of five students who register for the National Certificate (Vocational) examinations actually write them, while only 55% of them pass.[30]

Economic opportunities

The official unemployment rate for youth aged 15 – 24 in the WC was 41.2% in 2011 – and this rate increases to 52% if discouraged work-seekers are included.[31] As elsewhere in the country, low educational outcomes and the structure of the labour market are key drivers of youth unemployment: the demand for labour is highest for skilled and experienced employees (with a post-school qualification). As elsewhere in the country, youth unemployment in the WC too is highest for youth without a matric (47%) and lowest for those with any tertiary education and training (16%).[32] Youth Explorer data also show that:

- Unemployment is especially high for young people living in the north-eastern parts of the province, with youth unemployment well above 65% in some

Figure 5: Youth by employment, education and training status, by ward, Census 2011
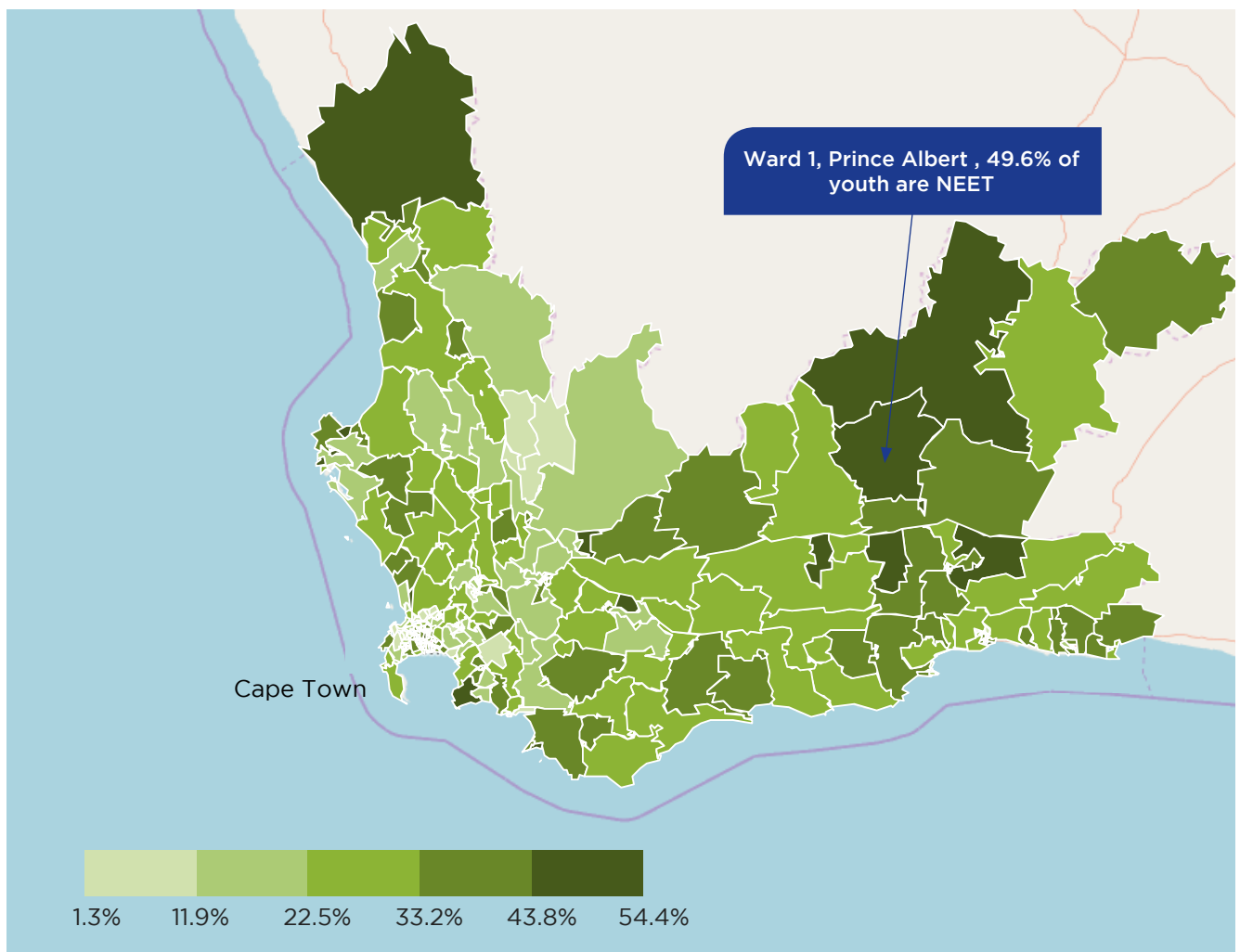
Ward 1, Prince Albert , 49.6% of youth are NEET

Cape Town

| 1.3% | 11.9% | 22.5% | 33.2% | 43.8% | 54.4% |

areas. Long distances between living areas and jobs, and significant transport costs, make it particularly difficult for these young people to navigate entry into the labour market.[33]

- 21% of WC youth live in households where no working-age adults (age 18 – 64) are employed. This increases to 30 – 40% for youth living in some of the townships or informal settlements in, for instance, the Cape Town Metropole and in rural areas around Stellenbosch, Beaufort West and Langeberg. While such youth are likely to be financially disadvantaged, they are also likely to have limited exposure to the working world or to information about available jobs, putting them at a further disadvantage.[34]

- A particularly vulnerable group is youth who are NEET. Overall, 33% of WC youth

fall into this category, with slightly more females NEET than males. Pockets with well above 40% of youth being NEET are found in urban areas such as Khayelitsha and Mitchells Plain, and more remote areas like Prince Albert and Oudtshoorn.

Due to these barriers, young people are often faced with extended periods of joblessness and unsuccessful job searches during which they run the risk of becoming depressed, discouraged and chronically unemployed.[35] Major changes can only be expected once the labour market produce more jobs and absorb more unskilled labour, or the education system produces job-seekers with the required skills.

Health and wellness

Poverty is associated with experiences of

social exclusion, heightened stress, violence and trauma, which all may increase risk and severity of mental illness and substance misuse and compromise access to care.

Health data[36] presented on the Youth Explorer show that:

- Between 2010 – 2013, the top two causes of death among male youth (aged 15 – 24) in the province were interpersonal violence (52%) and road injuries (12%).

- HIV (28%) and TB (13%) were the leading causes of death among female youth.

Improving the health of adolescents and youth is crucial for their current well-being and future economic productivity, as adolescent behaviours and health are key predictors of the *adult* burden of disease.[37] In short: young people in the Western Cape Province clearly experience challenges across multiple aspects of their lives. It is important to understand the way in which these deprivations interact to limit young people's overall well-being.

The evidence provided on the Youth Explorer points to the importance of improving literacy and numeracy levels for all, preventing school drop-out, and enabling access to higher education and training, as well connections between the worlds of school and work. Understanding and alleviating the heavy burdens of poverty and of disease among young people are other areas that need to be addressed.

The data, however, do not allow us to gain a better understanding of subjective areas of well-being, which later parts of the report will zoom in on.

YOUTH WELL-BEING AND AGENCY IN THE WESTERN CAPE AND BEYOND: A BRIEF REFERENCE TO EXISTING STUDIES

Key points

- Studies conducted as far back as the 1990s have consistently indicated a great deal of resilience on the part of youth, but also the need for guidance and support in times when the situation becomes too complicated or dire to allow them to explore new options.

Statistics clearly show that large proportions of youth in South Africa, as in the province, find themselves in dire situations, often faced with severe structural constraints. While the data provide insight into young people's socio-economic context, they do not explain how youth perceive and interact with that context.

Qualitative research, both internationally and nationally, shows extensively that young people can mitigate the often dire consequences of their constrained environments by tapping into and strengthening their resilience, which operates as a combination of individual strengths and socio-cultural resources.[38]

A brief review of Western Cape-based research indicates that youth in the more deprived (township) areas of the province not only continue to aspire to better lives, but also demonstrate remarkable resilience and ability to intervene in their life circumstances. In the context of poverty, young people may also exercise their agency in ways that are not regarded as positive, for example increased risk behaviour such as joining a gang.

As far back as the late 1990s, Ramphele[39] worked with young adults growing up in New Crossroads, a township characterised by high levels of poverty, unemployment, informal and unserviced housing. Ramphele details two individuals' stories of 'success': young people who managed to get into the stream of upward mobility despite growing up in extreme poverty, with brittle support structures and failing institutions. These were young people with high aspirations, who chose in favour of education, despite their families' wishes for them to start earning an income, or their peers' supporting the school boycott. They made harsh choices that frequently led to self-doubt and that rendered them outsiders in their communities:

Bulelwa knew all too well that a good education could be her only ticket out of the poverty of New Crossroads. Staying at a good school meant making a 'selfish' decision at the expense of her family's wellbeing, and against her mother's wishes. Not making this 'selfish' decision could cost her a brighter future. The long-term benefits of being in a better position to improve the family's welfare would also have to be foregone.[40]

Bulelani, the second of Ramphele's 'successes' creatively looked for ways to satisfy 'competing goals'. His wish was to go to a better school and get into higher education, but he did not want to alienate himself from his peers who supported the school boycott:

[…] he managed to convince his peers that his move to Rhodes High was not in any way a reflection of his weakening commitment to 'the struggle'. There was general agreement among his peers that most teachers in the township schools were not equal to the task. He suggested to them that by going to a better school he would become a resource for them by tutoring

them over weekends. He laughed as he told the story – yet at the time being necklaced to death as a sell-out was a very real threat.[41]

A subsequent series of qualitative studies with Western Cape youth has consistently presented similar findings:

Henderson[ix,42] emphasised the fragility in young people's lives brought on by the deprivation in their households, their experiences of mobility and caregiving, the levels of violence surrounding them, and power dynamics in sexual relationships[43]. She also stressed young people's ability to maintain a sense of agency within that fragile world.

Bray et al[44], De Lannoy[45], Swartz[46], Newman and De Lannoy[47] have all continued to point at the context of often severe hardship that remains a daily reality for most young people, alongside the very high aspirations of especially African youth. Various authors provide examples of parents deciding to send their children to better schools in neighbouring areas, thereby prioritising school fees over other household expenses; or of young people themselves negotiating access to schools that are perceived to perform better than those in their immediate environments.

However, the studies also draw attention to the complicated negotiations of personal aspirations and the need to belong to a broader peer group. Young people may believe in the value of education for social betterment, for example. But, given the often low educational outcomes of peers, trying to maintain an academic career creates the risk of becoming an outsider in one's peer group. Young people thus attempt to navigate their environments in ways that would not push them off their desired paths.[48] Similarly complex negotiations have been recorded with regards to health- and crime-related behaviour.[49]

However, agency in deprivation may sometimes also lead to increased risk behaviour instead of more "socially desirable" outcomes among youth. Young men and women may choose to act on their situation by seeking faster ways out of poverty rather than by maintaining a longer-term focus on socio-economic mobility through education.[50]

For example, one young man expressed doubt that education would really lead him to where he hoped to be one day ('a businessman'). He instead chose to join a gang, which brought instant status, identity, power – and several years later, death. Other studies indicate how some young girls from poorer communities engage in transactional sex to gain money, gifts and social status.[51]

Thus, the research shows the 'rudderlessness' in almost all spheres of young people's lives. They face a lack of clarity about what pathways to follow, or of the outcomes of certain decisions and choices. In the absence of such clarity, their trial and error approach to find solutions may lead to discouragement.

A longitudinal study with young people from various socio-economic backgrounds in the Cape Town Metropole[52] tells the story of Thandiswa, who makes various serious attempts to find work: printing her CV, going from shop to shop to drop it off, and signing up for training courses or recruitment agents (some of which were scams). But these moments of action are interspersed with times of depression and giving up as her efforts are never rewarded. Taking steps to achieve her goals turned out to be an emotional and financial rollercoaster ride. Thandiswa's story is not unique and the experience is not limited to that of Western Cape youth either.[53]

These qualitative studies' recordings of young people's attempts to get their lives on track and balance sometimes opposing needs are also reflected in survey research.

Quantitative data analyses demonstrate how young people enter into and out of temporary work, short training opportunities and periods of unemployment.[54] However, it

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ix   Henderson worked with Ramphele on the same project in New Crossroads. The youth described in her study may well be the same ones as those described in Ramphele's study.

may miss some of the nuance on the reasons for these and on the difficulties youth encountered while trying to find a stable job and better life.

In conclusion: all these studies have demonstrated a great deal of resilience on the part of youth, but also the need for guidance and support in times when the situation becomes too complicated or dire to explore new options. The findings of our study, presented next, corroborate much of the evidence of the older studies.

UNPACKING YOUNG PEOPLE'S LIVED REALITIES: A NEW SERIES OF FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSIONS WITH WESTERN CAPE YOUTH FROM A LOWER SOCIO-ECONOMIC BACKGROUND

Key points

- Participants did not consider their communities 'happy places'. While some found happiness inside their homes, all pointed at a range of issues affecting their well-being outside of the family homes.

- Youth were mostly concerned over safety issues; gangsterism; interpersonal violence and crime; deviant behaviour by both adults and young people; substance abuse; dirty and unhealthy living environments; and the lack of access to youth-specific support services.

- Girls and young women in all communities expressed fear of interpersonal violence and rape; in Langereef, a constant fear for abduction permeated conversations among girls and boys.

- Lack of support for one another – and for youth in particular – within the community, was mentioned in all groups.

- While many described their own homes and families as places of happiness, comfort, safety and support, it was also frequently mentioned that problems in the community, and with young people, 'start at home' as many parents are physically or emotionally unavailable for their children.

- Many other adult role-players in the communities, such as teachers, were also described as uncaring. However, examples were given of individuals who were actively involved with young people's lives and genuinely interested in their well-being. Where such cases were described, it was clear that these people had a positive impact on the participants' well-being.

- Young people described hardship and violence as part of their daily realities. They did, however, not consider these to be part of a normal life. They made clear connections between poverty and risk behaviour, deprivation and hopelessness in their communities. All asked for change.

- While recognising their own agency, they were also clear in their request for support at the individual, family and broader community levels that would address both immediate (recreational) and longer-term (opportunities) needs.

- Youth facilities were experienced as too far and difficult to reach; as short termed or lacking continuity; girls felt that most facilities provided activities only aimed at boys.

- Many of the desired recreational activities were described as having the immediate aims of keep children off the streets and out of trouble, and to offer a safe space for friendships and networking.

- Participants indicated that the kind of support needed may vary from person to person, reflecting the fact that youth is not a homogenous group.

While the data currently available on Youth Explorer capture various *objective* aspects or dimensions of youth well-being, there remains a lack of data on *subjective* domains of well-being that would help us understand, for instance, young people's

sense of happiness, safety, opportunity and satisfaction.

This section of the report presents the findings of the 10 FGDs with young men and women aged between 11 and 24. The findings are discussed thematically and focus on: the experience of community and family life; the value of education and experience of school; aspirations of the individual; young people, or peers, in general; and support needed for youth in the community.

Community and family life – 'I don't want to stay in an unhappy place anymore'

Participants' sentiments towards life in their communities were often mixed. Some spoke about their communities as 'happy' or 'nice' because 'people are bubbly' or 'they let one another be'. However, the groups' discussions quickly – or, immediately in many cases – turned into expressions of an overwhelming sense of negativity and a lack of happiness. The unhappiness was based on shared concerns over various safety issues; perceived or experienced deviant behaviour among both adults and young people; dirty and unhealthy living environments; and the lack of access to services that could provide specific support for young people. These lead to a general sense of isolation and disappointment, both within the community and beyond. There were, however, important differences in the extent of feelings of insecurity and isolation, with some of youth in the poorest rural areas conveying a truly constant sense of fear. The issues are further unpacked in the following sections.

Happiness, safety, and the lack thereof at the community level

Threats of rampant gangsterism, interpersonal violence and crime; a lack of support in the broader community, or within the family; and extensive substance abuse featured in all groups, and were often the first things mentioned to describe the communities. Youth spoke about these as almost 'normal': as part of their everyday experiences. But, importantly, they frequently expressed the very clear understanding that the lack of happiness in the community, and the extent and kinds of violence experienced and witnessed are, in fact, *not* part of a 'normal' life, should not be experienced, and cause serious damage to their lives and psyches.

When asked what her community was like, one young girl in Khayelitsha instantly replied:

> **Participant:** *Here in the community, it's a place full of naughty things. [...] Like when people go to work, their bags are grabbed. So, that's not right.* (Khayelitsha girls, 11 – 15-year-olds)

In the separate FGD with young Khayelitsha boys, the description of the community was almost identical to the young girl's, with added references to gun violence and drug abuse:

> **Participant:** *There are people who are robbing people who are coming from work and those who are using train as their means of transport [...] the one with the gun is saying that he is going to kill her and [she] doesn't want [to] give up her bag and her phones.* (Khayelitsha boys, 11 – 15-year-olds)

Asked how this situation made him feel about life in the community, he replied, 'I am not feeling happy'.

In Tafelsig, sentiments were very similar:

> **Participant:** *[Our community is] not actually a nice place; there's a lot of crime and gangsterism and people on drugs.* (Tafelsig boys, 16 – 19-year-olds)

The Bishop Lavis girls described their community as follows:

> **Participant:** *Everything that's happening in our community, like the kids dropping out of school and gangsters, [...] that makes the place unhappy. So the environment you live in, makes you unhappy. People want to move out.* (Bishop Lavis young women, 20 – 24-year-olds)

The Breede River girls and boys spoke about *maparapara:* '[... gangsters] who steal from

others. And people who rob us. [...] They steal our T-shirts on the line [...] They do house robberies [...] And they rob us at the ATMs if our grandmothers and grandfathers go to draw money.'

Many indicated that the only way to find some kind of happiness within the community is to stay away from everything as much as possible. For some that meant hardly ever leaving the house – which was the case for many of the girls in the Tafelsig and Bishop Lavis groups – or constantly thinking about strategies to keep oneself safe while being out.

Fear of crime and violence was especially – but not only – present in the discussion among the girls and young women, and more so among some of the poorest communities, like Langereef. There, a very palpable fear of abduction, rape and murder ran throughout the entire discussion and was present among both the boys and girls.

> **Participant:** *My community is not a happy place because some people don't know how to think about other people [consider other people's welfare]. They can see a child for example and they know that the child belongs to the neighbour, yet [...] they take that child and hide it in their house whilst the neighbour is busy looking for the child. [...] There was a man who took his wife's child [...] and locked him in the fridge and he died.* (Langereef/Stellenbosch rural, girls 11 – 15-year-olds)

> **Participant:** *I protect myself by walking with my friend; maybe my friend will be stolen; I will cry out and say, 'here is a child being stolen'; people will come and help and beat the person [stealing a child] to leave the child.* (Langereef/Stellenbosch rural boys, 11 – 15-year-olds)

Fear of rape was mentioned in several of the female groups and clearly restricted young girls' and women's ability to move around freely (especially, but not only, at night); to express themselves as they would like to; and made them question the kind of

relationship they would find themselves in when growing up. The Khayelitsha girls, for instance, felt they could never wear 'stylish', short clothes, for fear of being raped:

> **Participant:** *We need to have a place that we feel safe in. Like us as girls, we are still young and we don't want to be left out. We cannot dress the way we want. We must always wear to cover our bodies up.*

> **Interviewer:** *What is it that you fear to wear stylish things?*

> **Participant:** *Like those people who rape [...]* (Khayelitsha girls, 11 – 15-year-olds)

The Langereef girls made the connection between a life in deprivation (in its broadest definition) and the dangers that come with it. They spoke about young girls prostituting themselves because of a lack of money in the house (and thereby placing themselves at risk of rape, violence and murder), but they also mentioned how, for instance, a lack of electricity increases risks for women and children:

> **Participant:** *Yes, it's dark [...] in the house there is no electricity. You get inside while you are busy trying to put electricity [in the pre-paid meter of the house you are sharing electricity with ...]; before you even finish, he close[s] the door and rape you.*

> **Participant:** *Or kill you [...] that's why you need to have your own box.* (Langereef girls, 11 – 15-year-olds)

The awareness of the threat of rape and murder of young girls was mentioned also in the Bishop Lavis group by a young man when asked what he would like to see change in the community.

Direct experiences of crime, violence and death were described in all the groups, though some definitely presented more gruesome details than others:

> **Participant:** *People drink alcohol and end up stabbing each other until people get their intestines out.* (Langereef girls, 11 – 15-year-olds)

When asked what change he would like to see in the community, one young man powerfully described the wish for a peaceful, healthy environment:

> **Participant:** *Just to see healthy relationships between people based on love and respect for one another so that the children can see what love looks like from their parents. I want us to live in a lovely peaceful community, a place that people can be proud of. I don't want to stay in an unhappy place anymore.* (Bishop Lavis young men, 20 – 24-year-olds)

His sentiment was echoed in all the groups. The sense of trauma caused by the exposure to crime and violence was present in all groups and the request for support to deal with this was heard in several discussions. The young women in Bishop Lavis gave a particularly poignant description of suicide, which seemed to have become a 'normalised' situation in their direct environment, but with the clear indication that it is *not* normal and that young people need help:

> **Interviewer:** *So, you said… a lot of young people need support…?*
>
> **Participant:** *Definitely… because suicide is actually a big thing.*
>
> **Participant:** *They actually called our street* hang straat *['hanging street']*
>
> **Participant:** *[…] a few years ago…. Three or four people committed suicide. After each other.*
>
> **Participant:** *From young 'til old.*
>
> **Interviewer:** *[…] do young people have support in your community?*
>
> **Everybody:** *No!*
>
> **Participant:** *[…] we don't have any support there. You must support yourself.* (Bishop Lavis young women, 20 – 24-year-olds)

When asked what kind of support youth would need, both the Bishop Lavis and Tafelsig girls' groups were clear in their request for advice and therapy:

> **Interviewer:** *What kind of support would you like to see in your community?*
>
> **Participant:** *Like the NGOs that help … Childline, like giving advice. A rehab centre or something because we have a lot of drug abuse in our area …*
>
> **Participant:** *A local therapist …*
>
> **Participant:** *A place they can go to; [where someone says] we are here for assistance […] we can get you to a facility, you know.* (Bishop Lavis young women, 20 – 24-year-olds)

The Tafelsig girls felt that boys may need help even more than girls:

> **Participant:** *Everyone needs someone to talk to; that's why I suggest therapy. […] You [may] feel like something is wrong. You don't [know] what […] You don't know how to fix it […] so to have someone professional, that actually studied psychology […], that could help you. I think that is what we need in our community. […]*
>
> **Participant** *Yes, especially guys, they need help because they can't speak about their feelings. I think the guys in our community need a lot of help. […] They need help with expressing themselves with whatever it is they have going on […]; they need a happy place.* (Tafelsig, girls 16 – 19-year-olds)

Happiness, safety, or the lack thereof within the family

Many of the young participants referred to finding happiness, comfort, safety and support in their homes and families. However, it was also frequently mentioned that problems in the community, and with young people in particular, 'start at home'.

Participants gave several examples of parents not giving enough attention and support to youth, abusing substances, or deliberately putting their children at risk – these could all drive youth risk behaviour:

Participant: *I would say I'm happy. I'm always surrounded by my friends, family.* (Bishop Lavis young men, 20 – 24-year-olds)

Participant: *My support place is mostly my family 'cause they have supported me most of my life.* (Tafelsig girls, 16 – 19-year-olds)

While many of the participants spoke of finding care and love in their homes, several of the groups also referred to parents in the broader community as not 'dedicated', and not providing guidance and support to, or appropriate boundaries for, their children:

Participant: *Some [parents] are married, yes, but they're not interested. [They] don't know the children and the children feel like their parents don't understand them. Because they need to have that mother/father–daughter/son kind of relationship. We need more dedicated parents who will actually take interest in the child's life. So that their children can be on the right paths.* (Bishop Lavis young women, 20 – 24-year-olds)

Importantly, the participants' understanding of how these situations arise was not without nuance. They distinguished between examples of parents driving young people to risky behaviour, some unknowingly – by working long hours far from home, which meant little time with their children to offer them the attention they need. One Tafelsig young man felt unsupported, also with his schoolwork, as his 'mother is always working'. A young woman in Tafelsig looked after her younger sibling on her own, as their mother worked in another town. A Bishop Lavis young woman described how some youth were unable to complete their homework because of too many responsibilities at home, while parents work long hours. This lack of attention was suggested as one of the reasons for children becoming unruly at school.

Other parents were said to not provide love and care, or to place too much pressure

on the youth, which causes stress and a sense of isolation, depression, or of 'acting out'. A young woman in Tafelsig described how providing enough care and love to a young boy would serve as an antidote to the attraction of gang life – a thought that was echoed in several other groups:

Participant: *[…] like for a young boy that doesn't feel loved at home to take him under your wing and give him the love and support […] nurture him because he won't wanna disappoint someone who loves him so dear and I think that will help him drift away from gangsterism and drugs.* (Tafelsig girls, 16 – 19-year-olds)

There were also examples of parents who were engaging in risk behaviour and substance abuse, which then put the children and youth at risk; for instance, when they go out to the *shebeens* to look for their mother, as the Langereef girls indicated.

Finally, almost on the other side of the spectrum of parenting were parents who were said to intentionally place their children at risk. The Bishop Lavis girls spoke about mothers 'selling their children', as did the Langereef girls. They told of mothers asking their daughters to prostitute themselves, while others spoke of parents asking their children to go rob people:

Participant: *Some girls […] bunk school. Or [they] come to school but won't attend a certain class. Some sell their bodies because they have problems when they need money. Some parents support that [habit]. Maybe a girl [has] a* gweja,[x] *to get money her mother would say, 'My child bring back money from that* gweja *of yours'. Some parents do that.* (Langereef girls, 11 – 15-year-olds)

Mentors and role models?

The youth described many other adult role-players in their community as uncaring, too. However, they also referred to positive relationships with some individuals who 'were there for them', who were actively

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x   Local township derogatory term for 'black foreign man'.

interacting and genuinely 'involved with' them, as opposed to those who were 'just there', uninvolved, not interested, harsh and fast with their judgements.

Those who were described as uncaring included some of the teachers who are unconcerned about teaching, do not know how to teach, do not respect the basic school rules, or who are a direct threat to young women. This school experience is detailed more in the next section. Worth noting here, though, is that the constant sense of possible threat, disrespect, and lack of care created real feelings of isolation and distrust among young people. One adolescent described it as follows:

> Participant: *For me, school is a challenge because [you] deal with a lot of personalities and not just the students but the teachers as well. Have to understand them before approaching them. Some teachers you go to for help and others will gossip about you. It's a challenge to find people you can trust [...].* (Tafelsig girls, 16 – 19-year-olds)

However, there were also several examples of extraordinary individuals who *were* available for young people, who were trusted and caring and who therefore clearly had a strong and positive impact on their lives, and outlooks on life. For instance, a young woman expressed how some teachers provided nurturing support, sometimes in place of parents:

> Participant: *It's hard to tell my mother because [you] will be scared, but with your teacher [you] won't be scared to start because the teacher might see you in class just sitting and you are not alright; you are worrying. So, your teacher will call you at break time and ask. [You] tell him/her about that stress and s/he promise you not to tell anyone about it. The teacher will take it as private.* (Langereef girls, 11 – 15-year-olds)

Another mentioned how a teacher at school was 'like a mother' to them, while another described the positive effects of a motivating

principal who took an interest in the learners' well-being and schooling outcomes:

> Participant: *For me at my school, it [is] a combination of our teachers and the principal. When you walk past him, he greet[s] you by your name. Our principal always look[s] out for the well-being of the students. I would say he has a heart.* (Tafelsig girls, 16 – 19-year-olds)

The Tafelsig groups were an important example of the positive impact of a supportive individual or environment. These groups were organised with help of Mr K, a slightly older man who runs an NGO study group. His positive effect on both the young men and women was evidenced in the ways in which the participants expressed their sense of respect for, and trust in, him:

> Participant: *When I come to Mr K. I feel safe. He will always guide you and give you advice.*

> Participant: *Ja, [...] and you feel comfortable talking to him about your problems.*

> Participant: *Brother K. is one of those people that go the extra mile. He will come to your house [...]. He will come speak to your parents about what we do here at the programme. And tell them about your capabilities and how you can improve. That motivates you a lot.* (Tafelsig boys, 16 – 19-year-olds)

What stood out in the references to positive relationships was that these individuals 'were there for them' as they could be trusted; they provided support, love, guidance, a sense of belonging; and were said to do so without judgement.

Deprivation, hopelessness, and the request for support

Participants made clear connections between poverty and risk behaviour, deprivation and hopelessness among their peers and the adults in their communities, but they did not present themselves and their peers as merely passive victims. Of importance for policy and interventions is

that the kinds of support that youth said they need were directed at individual, family and broader community levels, and involved both immediate and longer-term support. These include close-by recreational facilities with gender-appropriate activities and continuity into other youth development initiatives that resonate with their aspirations and longer-term needs.

Despite frequently mentioning fear and insecurity caused by the behaviour of their peers or of many of the adults around them, the group discussions reflected that young people interpreted much of that behaviour itself to be caused by poverty and hopelessness. Transactional sex, teenage pregnancy, drug and alcohol abuse, thieving and gangsterism were cited as consequences of a life in deprivation. An adolescent girl expressed her perception of factors leading young women into teen pregnancy and transactional sex:

> Participant: *You are poor* mos, *you don't have enough food and you are so many. So as a girl like this, you meet, like, a big man* mos; *then he will say, 'I will give you this and that', but then you [eat] his money you can't refuse to sleep with him and then you get pregnant. So, my point is there are teachers who can counsel and there are some teachers who can cause more stress. They will be shouting at you, 'Hey, why did you do this?' but she or he didn't ask my background. If I tell her, she will see that I am not wrong. My background is the one which pushes me into this stress. Some are abused with those who they live with [...] so there is no need for you to shout at me because it's not my fault.* (Breede Valley girls, 14 – 19 year-olds)

Responding to a question on whether they thought young people in their community were in control of their lives, participants replied:

> Participant: *No, because when they have stress they want to drink, thinking that will rub [erase] the stress off [...] they want to use drugs [...] yet the stress will stay; you will only forget, but you go on to remember again.* (Langereef girls, 11 – 15-year-olds)

> Participant: *No, because people kill themselves because they have stress, even if it's for a small thing.* (Langereef girls, 11 – 15-year-olds)

In many of the FGDs, however, the young people discussed the extent to which one is able to remain in control of one's own life: to make choices that can be either protective or risky, to remain focused, and to seek support to avoid giving in to pressures:

> Participant: *They must work hard in their school work and not allow their peer pressure to be their stumbling block in achieving their dreams.* (Khayelitsha boys, 11 – 15-year-olds)

The concept of 'agency' is discussed later in this report. It is important to note though that none of the young people presented these choices and actions as easy or straightforward. Especially in the poorest communities, like Langereef, the sense of really being able to make considered choices in even just a small part of one's life seemed very evasive, as illustrated in earlier quotes. Many of the participants therefore made a plea for increased and dedicated support to strengthen their agency, and to turn both their lives *and* their communities around:

> Participant: *It can be a happy environment. Basically, you need a support system. You need your friends to keep you grounded. You need love – most important. And you need stability, safety, you need all that to make Bishop Lavis a better place to live and a happy environment.* (Bishop Lavis young women 20 – 24-year-olds)

This request for support warrants more attention as it is crucial in informing policies and interventions. In the narratives of these youth, the calls for support were situated at the individual, family and broader community levels, and involved both immediate and longer-term aspects. The report distinguishes between the participants' request for recreational facilities on the one hand: these they believe would support

them and their peers in their attempts to stay on 'the right path', keep busy and 'out of trouble' by giving them something to do in easily accessible, safe, youth- and gender-friendly spaces; and, on the other hand, their frequent call for 'more opportunities'. Close reading of the data shows that this particular request refers to both opportunities to help solve social issues and individual hardships immediately – for instance through the provision of therapy, anger management courses, guidance, support groups, etc., and opportunities that would somehow activate their options to a better future – for example, possibilities for volunteering, for contacting employers or accessing bursaries, for gaining work experience or finding ways back into the education system.

The next section deals in more detail with the request for recreational facilities and then expands on the request for 'opportunities'.

Recreational facilities

In all groups, young men and women expressed the wish for sports facilities or some form of 'youth centre' for arts (broadly defined) activities and other opportunities that would allow youth to occupy themselves after school rather than engaging in negative behaviour. One girl put it as:

> **Participant:** *An after-school leadership programme like soccer or b-boying,[xi] and it drains them so they don't have energy for wrong things. So, to have more interesting and fun programmes for the youth. So, it would take up a lot of their time or the school can have, like, activities like music or gymnastics.* (Tafelsig girls, 16 – 19-year-olds)

A young man summed up the psycho-social consequences of a lack of places to go to and things to do:

> **Participant:** *A lot of people don't know what to do after school, they just sit at home and it's not because we dumb; it's because there's no opportunities, no doors that can open for us. That's where a lot of the baby making and getting*

involved with the wrong stuff happens because we not busy, we not active. And also, that's where we sometimes get depressed and demotivated. (Bishop Lavis young men, 20 – 24-year-olds)

When asked about recreational facilities or a place where young people like to visit, the majority of participants felt that there was nothing. The young girls in the Khayelitsha and Bishop Lavis groups immediately indicated that there was 'not even a park' where children could play.

After some probing, however, there was usually recognition in the groups that some places for young people *are* in fact available. However, participants identified several shortcomings with existing facilities or programmes. These were often far away and thus difficult and dangerous to reach, especially for the youngest; they were often referred to as short lived 'because people lose interest'; and many facilities only cater for boys. Participants also felt that most, if not all the facilities – much like their communities – did not really offer the kind of support that youth in their areas are craving. The next sub-sections elaborate on each of these shortcomings.

1. Distance to facilities

Several groups mentioned that existing facilities were far away and therefore required money for transport, or they had to walk, which all groups said placed them in danger either of crime or of road hazards. The Khayelitsha girls explained:

> **Participant:** *There is a park at YB but we have [to] travel. There are a lot of cars on the way. All the cars are always running fast and they do not wait for people to cross the road.*

> **Participant:** *Small children […] cross the road on their own and are hit by cars. There is no-one accompanying them. At the stadium, it's a freeway and there is no-one controlling traffic.* (Khayelitsha girls, 11 – 15-year-olds)

xi   Also referred to as 'breakdancing'.

2. No continuity

Several groups mentioned that facilities or programmes come and go without any real continuity. The Bishop Lavis girls blamed both funders and young people or community members in general for this. Unfortunately, the researchers could not find further information about how the programmes were run, delivered or who they targeted. Such information would assist some kind of diagnostic analysis on what exactly happened and where things go wrong. The fact that young people and small children were painted as 'not being interested', coming 'only for the food' and being 'wannabe gangsters' may indicate that the programmes did not really connect with young people's aspirations or did not provide activities that could compete with the lure of gangsterism:

> **Participant:** *There was [...] the Rotary centre opposite Bishop Primary... [with] hip hop classes and karate ...*
>
> **Participant:** *Now it's gone ...*
>
> **Participant:** *The funding is bad ...*
>
> **Participant:** *I think [it] is because the people sponsoring this stuff saw that people weren't really interested. It's like only one or two people that would go. [...]*
>
> **Interviewer:** *So, people are just not interested?*
>
> **Participant:** *No not really. Even small children of 11, 12; they wannabe gangsters.* (Bishop Lavis young women, 20 – 24-year-olds)

Girls in Khayelitsha pointed out that other community forces may also work against the running of youth programmes. They spoke of taking the initiative to organise themselves and provide activities for the younger children, but were discouraged from continuing. The lack of a physical facility where they could continue with their initiative led them to give up on it. This points to the importance of easily accessible, safe and youth- and child-friendly spaces in their vicinity:

> **Participant:** *We used to have dancing activities, like, with my friends; we would gather younger children and get them to dance while we watch them. But it was stopped by the elders from the community [...] because we made too much noise. [...] we don't have a hall.* (Khayelitsha girls, 11 – 15-year-olds)

3. No gender diversity

Young women in all the groups pointed out that, where there were facilities, they often only catered for boys or young men. Especially sports facilities were said to provide only space for soccer, which is not always attractive to young women:

> **Participant:** *We need to have our ground so that we can play sport. Even here at Kapa Stadium there is no place for [us] because most of the people who play there are playing soccer [...]; so most of the people who go there are boys. I don't see why it's only boys who should be playing sport because as girls we can also play sport.* (Khayelitsha girls, 11 – 15-year-olds)
>
> **Participant:** *[...] Okay, they have soccer – what do the girls have? Nothing.* (Bishop Lavis young women, 20 – 24-years-old)

Female participants asked for sports facilities for netball and swimming (rather than soccer or rugby); for places where they could engage with fashion, the arts (including dancing and drama); and where they could have 'bonding time', share experiences and 'just relax' without feeling unsafe.

In sum, when asked what facilities they would like to have available, preferences across all groups ranged from a playground (especially among the youngest groups), a safe and clean park, a swimming pool, a gym, a theatre or a movie theatre, all within easy reach and, given their severe financial constraints, affordable (or free).

The older girls and boys mentioned some kind of 'youth club' (some specified a club 'where alcohol would not be allowed') where youth could hang out, have a good time

without fearing danger, and – explicitly – where they could support one another. The notion of offering support to one another came up several times, and especially in the female groups:

> **Participant:** *I would have liked a sisterhood, there in Bishop Lavis.*
>
> [Everybody agrees]
>
> **Participant:** *If you have a problem … that's where suicide also comes in, like betrayal. [...] If you have a problem you can come to me, or us. We won't go tell anyone outside of this circle. [...] And for guys… I think that will help them a lot, especially the wannabe gangsters. [...] Like a sisterhood and a brotherhood thing; that would be really nice.* (Bishop Lavis young women, 20 – 24-year-olds)

Importantly, many of the desired recreational activities were described as having an immediate aim: to keep children out of trouble and off the streets; to offer a safe space for friendships and networking. However, these activities and spaces should *also* provide a connection to a longer-term view on the future: the participants spoke often about their wish to find a way forward, to forge connections and to be given the opportunity to 'open doors'. The final point of this section discusses this in more detail.

Offering 'opportunities'

Throughout the conversations, there was the general sense that, even when available, facilities or programmes did not really offer young people a sense of opportunity. This had to do with the lack of continuity of programmes, or their inability to connect to young people's aspirations and longer-term needs. As a young man said:

> **Participant:** *I don't feel like we have much going in terms of [what] attracts young people. [...] I firmly believe that there's a lot of potential in Bishop Lavis*

but currently everybody is frustrated [...] with the fact that they are just in Bishop Lavis. There's people who have never been out of Bishop Lavis and that is kind of crippling [...]. (Bishop Lavis young men, 20 – 24-year-olds)

Another example was a young man's disappointment in the soccer programme in his community:

> **Participant:** *I wanted to be a professional football player but [...] the support that you need is not here in the community. [...] So, you struggle in finding ways to become the professional that you want to be.* (Bishop Lavis young men, 20 – 24-year-olds)

Tafelsig participants, however, offered a positive example of a programme that *did* seem to be getting the longer-term connection right:

> **Participant:** *We get to meet people like Professor Jonathan Jansen. We get to meet all these great people. You get exposure and all you doing is, like, studying. You get to hear other people's stories. People meet you and they want to offer you bursaries and things like that. So that's some of the opportunities we get.* (Tafelsig girls, 16 – 19-year-olds)

Importantly, the participants indicated that the kind of support that is needed may well vary from young person to young person – a reminder that youth is not a homogenous group. Some may thrive in an educational environment that leads to bursaries etc., while others may wish to explore the route of becoming a professional football player. Some of the girls asked for connections to job and volunteering options for those who left school. We will return to this important issue of 'support' and 'opportunities' in more detail later.

'At least it was a school you could go to': the perceived importance of education and the realities of under-resourced schools

Key points

- All participants understood education as empowering and as creating a possible pathway to a 'better life'. Pro-poor education policies and programmes were considered very helpful.

- Disappointment was expressed about some teachers' performance and conduct; the effects of these on learners' behaviour, and *vice versa*, were acknowledged.

- Main concerns were under-resourced schools, large class sizes and safety at school, all of which were described as impacting teachers' ability to teach efficiently and learners' ability to concentrate.

- The lack of access to quality education was clearly recognised as a barrier to reaching their aspirations.

- Participants spoke of ways in which this situation could be changed for the better; they recognised the role of supportive adults, such as an inspiring headmaster who makes learners feel noticed, supported and challenged.

All participants described school as 'very important'.

> **Participant:** *First of all, you need education, and you have to have the discipline to sacrifice things in order to do well.* (Tafelsig boys, 16 – 19-year-olds)

> **Facilitator:** *Do you think school is important?*

> **Everyone:** *Very, very important.*

> **Participant:** *Because, if you don't get taught things at home, where else are you gonna learn it from? They say it starts at home but if it does not start at home; it starts at school.* (Bishop Lavis young men, 20 – 24-year-olds)

Most young people said they were happy at school because of its social nature and it provided a sense of safety that was not found outside the school walls.

> **Participant:** *Because I know that I am safe and there is nothing that can harm me as there are teachers to protect us.* (Khayelitsha boys, 11 – 15-year-olds)

All groups also expressed their appreciation for the fact that there were no-fee schools near their homes; the school nutrition programmes were highly appreciated too and youth acknowledged that the food was healthy and nutritious.

> **Participant:** *There are mothers who cook for us so that during break we can have a decent lunch.* (Khayelitsha boys, 11 – 15-year-olds)

> **Participant** *[…] we get food. We eat for free […] We are given fruits; […] they give us food [that] is considered [a] balanced diet. (*Breede Valley girls 14 – 19-year-olds)

This sense of happiness was, however, not uncontested: some participants, like the Tafelsig boys, simply stated, 'not liking it [school]' as 'it is boring'. Participants in all groups also expressed deep disappointment and discouragement because teachers were abusive, lacked motivation, and were ineffective or incapable of explaining the curriculum content. These experiences, however, were clearly more present among those who attended schools in the poorer areas. Reports of corporal punishment were

rife, too, and several references to sexual abuse by teachers were heard in the various girls' groups.

The way in which certain teachers were described in dealing with their classes indicated a context that was clearly unconducive to learning, such as these practices reported in Khayelitsha schools:

> Participant […] *Miss who plays with her phone during her period [when] she should be teaching us.*
>
> Participant: *They [the teachers] say, 'let's sleep', after that she plays with [her] phone.*
>
> Participant: *Or she gives us work from a book and not write it out and she checks her messages or whatsapp.*
>
> Participant: *Or she can give an activity and not explain the activity and switch on the phone. 'Tomorrow we are going to do that activity' [imitating the teacher's voice]. If you are wrong she will beat [you]; yet you don't know how to do that activity.*
>
> Participant: *Ours say, 'lets sleep' until the whole period is over. […] Our LO teacher says she doesn't have time to teach us. (*Khayelitsha girls, 11 – 15-year-olds)

Or these, reported by the Tafelsig boys:

> Participant: *Our teachers are spiteful with us. […] When it is our turn to use the computers, they just say the computers are not working.*
>
> Participant: *[Our maths teacher] just gives us the work but doesn't explain it.* (Tafelsig boys, 16 – 19-year-olds)

Participants were not unaware that some of the teachers' behaviour might be a consequence of some of the learners' behaviour. There was recognition of the vicious cycles created by disrespect and power struggles between teachers and learners, though there were sometimes rather heated conversations about how and where that cycle started. In Khayelitsha, for instance, a girl stated:

> Participant: *At my school, there is no respect from learners for teachers. Teachers are [treated] like below other parents. (*Khayelitsha girls, 11 – 15-year-olds)

However, participants were *also* aware of the consequences of teachers' inability or unwillingness to teach, a situation that was often referred to as one of the reasons for low performance among learners. The young people also indicated that some subjects were simply too disconnected or far removed from their own realities to be interesting. For the Khayelitsha girls group, some subjects were difficult because learners were unfamiliar with the nature of the subject material, such as business transactions and balance sheets.

While school was mostly described as safer than the surrounding areas, participants mentioned that there were areas within the school grounds that they considered unsafe and rather stayed away from, such as the toilets or at the back of a school. Several participants spoke about learners misbehaving, bullying, and abusing others, without teachers reacting or coming to the defense of those who were being abused.

> Participant: *I feel unhappy in the school […] because older people [learners] take our lunchboxes […] they report it but the teachers do nothing about that.*
>
> Participant: *[…] they steal our stuff.* (Tafelsig boys, 16 – 19-year-olds)

Participants also explained the difficulties of concentrating in class when other learners are outside listening to music or making noise, without anyone with authority standing up to them.

In the majority of the groups there was reference to schools being vandalised or severely under-resourced, much to the young people's despair. The Khayelitsha boys described attending school in classes of no less than 40 to 82 learners. Tafelsig girls spoke about classes of 60 learners. One young man from Bishop Lavis explained how

things can easily deteriorate when social issues from the communities spill over into the schools:

> **Participant:** *It was a good school in the beginning but because of the lifestyles of the children that live in the surrounding communities [...] everyone wants to be gangsters. So, they started dismantling the school. And kids were bunking school and would break the windows [...] so then it became a bad thing.* (Bishop Lavis young men, 20 – 24-year-olds)

Perhaps his follow-on statement reflected an understanding that education in such a context is not of the best possible quality:

> **Participant:** *It was a school at least, so we could at least go there and learn something [...]*

While the situation in schools, as described by the participants – and in many other WC and South African studies – may seem very complex to tackle, the young people themselves spoke about ways in which the situation could be changed for the better. One young woman described how her school had been 'corrupt' and 'vandalised' until a new headmaster brought a drive and dedication to not only provide better resources for learning but also to make learners feel noticed, supported and challenged:

> **Participant:** *So, we got a new principal, Mr. B. So, when he came, he changed the school. We got a new hall, we got a library built for us. The school was fixed, the school was repainted and decorated. Some of the classrooms were painted; we got new desks, new projectors. The school was known as corrupt, but since the upgrades the school started to change and we got more sponsors from different organisations [...] the principal, he was there for the school when no-one really cared.* (Tafelsig girls, 16 – 19-year-olds)

Other learners suggested that teaching techniques and materials could be adjusted and be more interactive to make it easier to understand or to keep learners' interest:

> **Participant:** *If we can at least [once] a month watch something [that happened], maybe we can see a change in learning history. There should be someone talking because we learn differently. Some of us, we learn through listening, some of us we learn through life, some of us we learn through doing things like watching movies.* (Khayelitsha girls, 11 – 15-year-olds)

In recognising that there may be a limit to what can be done within the school context and with the current teacher body, several of the groups asked to sort out just the basic provision of resources at school ('what our school really needs is tables and windows'), but also to make available all the necessary subjects, additional tutoring and remedial teaching support:

> **Participant:** *I would like the government [...] to bring change to my community and to our school as well. And the subjects that we don't have, we would like to have them because they will help in the future [...] we also like the sponsorship for [...] computers.* (Breede Valley girls, 14 – 19-year-olds)

The importance of getting quality education right was clearly reflected in the young people's thoughts on the kinds of lives they aspire to.

Aspirations

Key points

- Aspirations for a better, more stable life were high among all participants.

- The majority of participants, across all age and gender groups, expressed aspirations for a professional, stable life that would allow them a much more affluent lifestyle than what they currently know.

- But there was the realisation that the odds may well be stacked against them because of financial deprivation, the lack of support, and the absence of a school environment that is conducive to teaching and learning and which provides a wide range of subjects to choose from.

- More rural youth spoke of their geographic isolation as a possible barrier, and older youth spoke about the absence of work-related opportunities.

The majority of the young people spoke about wanting to become lawyers, doctors, lecturers, teachers, accountants, engineers, psychologists, etc. This wish for a professional career and a stable, high income, was not only driven by the wish for individual betterment, but clearly reflected the desire to also bring about substantial change for their families and their communities and to alleviate the current levels of sorrow and deprivation:

Interviewer: *What are your dreams in life?*

Participant: *My dream is to become a social worker and help other children not to be stolen.*

Participant: *I want to teach children.*

Participant: *I want to be a doctor, when people are sick, I will help them.*

Participant: *I desire to become a policeman so that* tsotsis *stop stealing children.*

Participant: *I want to train to be a lawyer to discuss the things that happen [in the community].* (Langereef boys, 13 – 16-year-olds)

Both the Bishop Lavis and Tafelsig girls expressed clearly the wish to put an end to the daily struggles of a life in (financial) deprivation for both themselves and their parents:

Participant: *[…] I want a steady job […]. I can't still think I have a job now for six months and then stay at home for another six months. No thank you. […] I want to go overseas. I want to travel. I want to leave the country for a little while. […] I don't want to struggle, I struggled my whole life. I want a good life.*

Interviewer: *What does a good life look like?*

Participant: *I want my own house. I don't want to think about what I'm going to be eating tonight or where the rent is going to come from. […] I've had that for, like, years* (Bishop Lavis young women, 20 – 24-year-olds)

Participant: *A strong financial situation. […] Working and giving your parents what they were lacking when they were younger. Making them happy. […] giving back to them for what they did for you when you were younger. So, for example, if you [are] staying in a wendy house, one day you can buy your parents a big house. Everyday telling them: 'there's always going to be food […] luxuries, there's going to be trips for you, you can go on holiday'.* (Tafelsig girls, 16 – 19-year-olds)

More young women were clearer in expressing educational and career aspi-

rations than young men, but the male participants too wished to 'be wealthy', 'change the environment I live in' and 'put my parents in a different area' (Tafelsig boys, 16 – 19-year-olds; Bishop Lavis young men, 20 – 24-year-olds).

The adolescent girls in the Breede Valley group showed an especially clear understanding of the connections between school, subject choice, higher education and their goals – an understanding that was not present among some of the younger participants. The slightly older youth also understood, however, that educational and career trajectories are not always in one's own control. The fact that not all high schools offer the necessary subjects for their aspired career was mentioned several times, and mentioned even more frequently was that the schools streamed learners into maths literacy instead of 'pure maths'.

Also frequently referred to was the fact that learners in certain schools do not get to choose the subjects they want to study. For instance, one young woman explained how she wanted to become an actress or musician, but this was not attainable because of the lack of subject offer *and* choice at school:

Participant: *Art in South Africa comes first. Actress, music, being a comedian, anything in that industry comes number one […] I really love culture but at our school we don't actually have none of those […] and I had to choose the subjects that I am in [grade 10]. I didn't even have a choice […] because the classes were full. So, I had to take Economics, Business, Maths Literacy and Consumer Studies.* (Breede Valley girls 14 – 19-year-olds)

In addition, several groups referred to issues related to the lack of articulation between the different parts of the education system. Some of the young women pointed out, for instance, that options were slim when one needs or wants to leave the schooling system to try to earn money:

Participant: *Not everyone passes as well as other people to go to universities. So that's the crap thing, the colleges also don't always have the things that you want to study. And then you must still do an internship and I don't have time for that also […]*

Participant: *To add to that, there's people that didn't pass matric well, that don't have matric. But then they have the potential to do the job and could have really been grateful for the job and do it as you would want it. That's the thing, they underestimating people… […] 'you don't have matric, ag I can't man, that's the least requirement' […] now that person goes, 'ag I'm gonna sit on the corner and start begging for money'. Because that's what happens, especially with drop-outs, they don't feel to go to school anymore. Now they want to work, provide something but they can't […].* (Bishop Lavis young women, 20 – 24-year-olds)

The older youth also expressed a very clear understanding of the various costs associated with studying at institutes of higher education (which go beyond the fees only), and the difficulties they would face if they wanted to study but were not able to get financial support.

Participant: *[…] well, if the kids want to go far in life and achieve their dreams; they can't do it without money. How are they going to get to university? Taxi fare? Everyday? And the 25th [pay day] is still far … and by the 15th the parents start worrying where the money for transport and taxi fare is going to come from, so they have to go borrow money from somewhere or someone. […]*

Participant: *The moment you think about college, all this kind of stuff runs through your head […] in order for you to go to college, you need money, and in order to have money, you need a job. […] if I didn't get a bursary I wouldn't know what I would do because I really didn't have the money to pay.* (Bishop Lavis young men, 20 – 24-year-olds)

In several of the groups, young people made a clear connection between the loss of dreams, the lack of education, poverty and crime:

> **Participant:** *Our prisons are full of our community children. Our brothers and sisters, uncles and aunts – the prisons are full of them because of lack of education and they steal.* (Breede Valley girls, 14 – 19-year-olds)

However, these young people's awareness that structural barriers hinder their socio-economic trajectories did not mean that they presented themselves as passive victims. They frequently mentioned young people needing 'to work hard', 'focus', and remaining committed and responsible to reach their goals. In several instances, it is possible that this was mentioned as participants attempted to give what they thought would be socially desirable replies. But, in several discussions it was clear that there was also a real understanding that personal choices and actions lead to specific outcomes and that one is going to have to work in order to get what you want.

In a final round of questions, the FGDs probed this sense of agency or control, and, circling back to participants' earlier requests for support, asked once more what interventions or services could help support youth in their areas.

Key points

- While several participants described instances in which youth could be driven to risky behaviour, many also showed resilience and a strong sense of agency within a context of poverty. Their aspirations often informed their sense of agency.
- They spoke of different 'protective' measures that could contribute to their own well-being.
- Boys experienced peer pressure to use substances or join gangs; the girls mainly spoke about peer pressure to go out, drink, or fall pregnant.
- Youth of all age groups, both genders and in all areas, explained that socialising often happened at their or a friend's house in an attempt to stay safe and avoid deviant behaviour.

While acknowledging the pitfalls of risk behaviour, a Breede Valley adolescent described dealing with these as a matter of personal choice:

Participant: *If you want to drink, you will drink, and if you don't want to, you won't drink. It is your choice but then they love to drink as youngsters […] and you do get pregnant. So, it's your choice.* (Breede Valley girls, 14 – 19-year-olds)

A peer went on to state that poverty does not have to lead to transactional sex:

Participant: *I don't think being pushed by poverty could lead you to prostitution and stuff. I don't think that's the only way that will bring money. Because that will bring diseases and viruses [and] that will harm you once again […] can't you at least go out to town […] ask for a job. It could be anything.* (Breede Valley girls, 14 – 19-year-olds)

The nature and time constraints of the FDGs did not always allow for in-depth individual probing and it is therefore not entirely clear to what extent the responses were reflections of what was considered possible, or of what these young people were actually practising. We did, however, capture examples of strategies to stay safe, or to stay 'on track' with education.

Several of the boys spoke about having to navigate peer pressure towards substance abuse or gangsterism, while the girls mainly spoke about peer pressure to go out, drink or fall pregnant. A young boy explained how he would be pressured, and even hit, but chose to 'run away' – similar to what the young boys in Khayelitsha told us:

Participant: *And those children who […] say: 'Hey, you! Drink alcohol' – and if you don't want, they slap you. Then I will just say, 'I don't want' and I run away.* (Langereef boys, 11 – 15-year-olds)

When asked how they spent most of their 'downtime', the majority of participants referred to spending time indoors, with family. Girls especially explained being 'a loner' and staying indoors:

Participant: *I don't take a step outside of the house.* (Bishop Lavis young women, 20 – 24-year-olds)

How, and where, they spend their time was presented as a conscious decision to try to keep themselves safe from violence and peer pressure. Young men and women of all age groups and in all areas explained that socialising often happened at their house or the house of a friend. It was considered better, or safer, not to even try to go out so they would not be tempted into drinking, for instance.

However, staying indoors all the time was not everyone's preferred tactic. A Khayelitsha girl described trying to balance 'staying inside with books' and 'going out to play':

> **Participant:** *Me, what I told myself is that I cannot [always] stay indoors. I tell myself I don't have to keep myself indoors reading my books. I can still read my books and play in the streets.* (Khayelitsha girls, 11 – 15-year-olds)

In addition to these kinds of 'protective' measures, several young people spoke about how they took the initiative to organise activities and events for themselves and others. The Khayelitsha girls organised dance sessions for the younger children; several of the Bishop Lavis youth spoke about setting up study groups and friendship groups where they could bring their sorrows and questions and help one another out:

> **Participant:** *Just a small group [...], so that we can help each other in subjects that we don't know. Maybe someone knows something that I don't know then she can explain to me and I also know something that she doesn't know and we can explain to each other.* (Khayelitsha girls, 11 – 15-year-olds)

Others referred to actively seeking out support of their church or a youth organisation. However, it was clear that this search for support was not always easy. As mentioned before, there were instances where the young people ended up feeling misunderstood, which clearly led to disappointment.

The need to *actively* support young people's agency

Key points

- The majority of the participants said that they had hoped their lives would be 'further along' by now.
- All expressed the need for a range of support services, offered by dedicated and respectful adults or peers, to help solve present individual and societal issues. Such services ranged from reliable police and security services to nurses, teachers, mentors, and therapists.
- Older youth especially asked for services that would open up possibilities for the future. There is a need for interventions that can help clarify and connect youth to pathways to an aspired future, to study further, re-connect to the schooling system after having left school, or gain work experience.

When asked what young people need to achieve their dreams, responses ranged from 'self-drive', 'focus' and 'being disciplined', to a range of support services offered by truly dedicated and respectful adults or peers that would help solve *present* individual and societal issues (addiction, depression, violence), and which would open up possibilities for the *future*. Importantly, there was a strong request for these services to be pro-active and to understand the daily limitations youth face in their search for solutions to the barriers in their lives.

> **Participant:** *Just imagine there's a place that I could actually go to for help. […] for resources, where someone will tell me, they'll take my hand, and they'll help me. That would make my mom very happy. Because all of our moms don't necessarily know the answer or know where to go.* (Bishop Lavis young women, 20 – 24-year-olds)

All of the groups mentioned the need for services that would help solve present issues. Such services ranged from reliable police and security services to nurses, teachers, mentors, and therapists. For instance, several participants requested more effective and 'forceful' police, such as this girl in Langereef, where the fear for abduction and rape dominated the conversations:

> **Participant:** *The police should be around here in the squatter camp because the police [security guards] here in the*

squatter camp – they are not forceful. They should be forceful for people who are drunk in the street […] There are children who are sent for errands at night […] then they meet with drunk people. A drunk person cannot control himself. He may end up raping a child. (Langereef girls, 11 – 15-year-olds)

Other girls described the need for dedicated nurses, therapy centres, and some form of pro-active mentoring:

> **Participant:** *We need more helpful medical assistance so people can be happy, especially children. Because, these days, […] the nurses just do it for the sake of doing it, because it's their jobs. So, we need people [who are] actually passionate about their work.*

> **Participant:** *You need to take someone under your wing that you can educate and you can mentor. […] That's the most important thing, because that's why people are always doing the wrong things because there isn't anybody that can tell them, 'c'mon, let me show you the right way'.* (Bishop Lavis young women, 20 – 24-year-olds)

As described earlier, several groups, especially those older than 15, spoke about the urgent need for 'opportunities' to avoid boredom, discouragement and depression. This included recreational facilities to keep young people occupied after school. It also

included opportunities that would facilitate possibilities: interventions that would help clarify and connect them to pathways to an aspired future, to study further, re-connect to the schooling system after having left school, or gain work experience:

> **Participant:** *I like [this place] because I grew up here, but […] it gets boring because we don't have opportunities. For example, […] last year there was a guy from Paarl in the Olympic games. You see that [on TV]; here we don't have opportunities.* (Breede Valley girls, 14 – 19-year-olds)

> **Participant:** *I want the government to open up more opportunities for people that are no longer in school […] just more opportunities.* (Bishop Lavis young men, 20 – 24-year-olds)

> **Participant:** *Ja, like in Bishop Lavis, there isn't a place where you can volunteer, or do stuff to keep yourself busy. Like if there were places, whatever it may be now. […] I believe that I would be basically volunteering all over but there's nothing.*

> **Participant:** *I actually think opportunities – there's not a lot of that, like I was at home for two years [unemployed after finishing school] […] more jobs, man.* (Bishop Lavis young women, 20 – 24-year-olds)

Finally, there were several references to the need for financial support. This was certainly not a request motivated only by the wish for some form of youthful consumption. Previous sections have already pointed out that the participants made clear connections between a life in deprivation and risk behaviour, absence of parental guidance, and low educational outcomes.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The findings indicate that the five provincial pillars to support youth development (family foundations; education and training; economic opportunity; identity and belonging; and reconnection opportunities) were well chosen. However, it is clear that the accessibility and implementation of existing programmes have several, sometimes severe, inefficiencies and gaps. This final section summarises the main issues described by the young participants, their suggested interventions or solutions, the gaps that seem to exist in the PYDS and its current implementation.

Family and community life

Key points

- Solutions to increase safety and to treat the trauma of constant exposure to threat should be included in the PYDS implementation plan. Suggestions included regular and stronger police presence in communities, creating trust and ethical cooperation between communities and police forces, holding perpetrators to account, implementing some of the criteria for 'safe cities', increasing employment opportunities and mitigating the effects of income poverty.

- It is important that parenting support be accessible to all parents in impoverished communities and not only those who are considered 'dysfunctional'; such support should be viewed as part of interventions that provide material and financial support and further guidance for parents.

- Expanding access to well-trained professionals to deliver psycho-social support to help families to develop coping strategies and access services is an imperative.

- This extensive support to families and communities will require collaboration between government departments, civil society and the private sector through a whole-of-society approach.

Community life. All participants indicated a sense of unhappiness with life in their communities. They identified the main issues to be crime, violence, dirty and underserviced areas, a lack of 'mentors' among the adults around them, a general lack of trust in the broader community, a sense of isolation and trauma, and a lack of easily accessible and reliable facilities. In particular, they identified a lack of facilities that a) provide recreational opportunities; b) help them cope with their current situation; and/or c) can form bridges to a better future. The young people explained that many of the 'social ills' in their households or communities were caused by deep levels of deprivation which drive some to despair, substance abuse, gangsterism, transactional sex and suicide. Peer pressure, the lack of alternatives and of positive role models were described as some of the drivers.

Safety, or rather the lack thereof, in the community was mentioned by all. The fear of kidnapping, rape, mugging, gang violence and murder was expressed in all groups, with the young people linking deprivation, crime and violence. While some asked for stronger police presence, others indicated distrust of the police. Several groups asked for a more decisive approach towards known criminals, drugs dealers, alcohol distribution and gangs in their neighbourhoods.

Detailed recommendations on how best to mitigate the high levels of violence in the country, and in the province, fall outside of the scope of this study. However, implementing regular and stronger police presence in all the areas, creating a sense of trust and ethical cooperation between communities and police forces, holding perpetrators to account, implementing some of the criteria for 'safe cities'[55] (e.g. sufficient and working street lights; safety buttons), increasing employment opportunities and mitigating the effects of income poverty may begin to shift some of the dire levels of crime and violence. It is imperative that solutions to increase safety and to treat the trauma of constant exposure to threat are included in the PYDS implementation plan: the knock-on effect of these on other desired outcomes such as education and employment is indisputable.

Family. While many described finding love, care and support at home, there were frequent mentions of parents not knowing how best to parent, or having turned to substance abuse and even exploiting their own children. All participants spoke about high levels of stress within their families, even if they were considered supportive. Several mentioned that their mothers too did not always know where to find relevant information or how to help steer their lives in the right direction. Many spoke of caregivers working long hours away from home, leaving no time or energy to care or connect.

The WCG's emphasis on parenting support is thus warranted. However, in the context of parents needing to operate in heavily impoverished communities which affect their capacities to parent, it is important that such support be accessible to *all* and not only those who are considered dysfunctional. Secondly, such support should not be seen separate from interventions that provide material and financial support and further guidance for parents to better guide their children. Many young people mentioned the financial constraints that lead parents to worry about providing food, transport money or educational support. This confirms what is well recognised in existing research: that poverty increases stress levels and has a negative effect on physical and emotional health.[56] Expanding access to well-trained professionals to deliver psycho-social support that helps families to develop coping strategies and access services is an imperative. Given constraints on public resources (including finances, skills and capacity), the practical implementation of this will require collaboration across government departments, civil society and the private sector through a whole-of-society approach.

The self, and aspirations

Key points

- Despite the effects of poverty, the youth indicated that they have not lost their inspiration or ability to dream about a life for themselves and others that is different and better.

- All participants had experienced very dire circumstances that could easily push them off their belief in possibility and it was not always clear to what extent they really managed to remain resilient in the face of peer pressure and multiple deprivations.

- It is important therefore that the Province finds ways to pro-actively reach out to all young people by creating education and economic opportunity as well as providing facilities for guidance and support.

All the issues faced at the family or community level were painted along sky-high aspirations and wishes for a better life for themselves, their families and their communities. Most young people expressed aspirations towards a professional, stable life that would allow them an affluent lifestyle.

This wish for a professional career and a stable, high income, was not only driven by the desire for individual betterment, but also to bring about substantial change for their families and their communities and to alleviate the current levels of sorrow and deprivation. This was true for all participants, across gender, race and age. However, the older groups gave indications of understanding how their structural constraints could hinder the fulfillment of their aspirations. More rural groups referred to isolation of their area as a possible barrier. In both Black and Coloured communities there was reference to peers who had given up wishing for a better life and who were now 'just waiting' to see change happen. How much of the latter was due to discouragement among young people or peer and community influence, was not clear.

The PYDS speaks of a goal that the province's youth are 'inspired' (p. 33). The narratives of many of these young people indicate that despite the effects of poverty, they have not lost their inspiration or ability to dream, and to picture for themselves and others around them a life that is different and better. Several participants (of all ages, both male and female) pointed out that 'you have a choice' as an individual not to engage in risky behaviour or crime. However, it was not always clear to what extent these youth really did manage to remain resilient in the face of peer pressure and multiple deprivations. All these young people had experienced very dire circumstances that could easily damage their belief in possibility.

It is important therefore that the Province finds ways to *pro-actively* reach out to all young people and, as the PYDS points out, to provide them with 'a sense of imminent possibility'. The pillars of education and economic opportunity play an important role therein, but so does the provision of facilities that provide guidance and support.

Education

The PYDS sets itself the target 'to ensure that youth are literate, numerate and prepared for life and work' (p. 6).

Participants' narratives indicated that, for some, school was a place of stability, safety and belonging. A number of learners were accessing fee-paying schools in an area that was a little further away from where they lived. They described receiving quality education with clear guidance from teachers and school management. Among the majority of those who accessed schools in their immediate, more deprived areas, there was a general sense of gratefulness for access to fee-free schools and to the schools' nutrition programmes. Several groups spoke of the positive impact of caring, supportive and engaged teachers and headmasters on their lives. However, especially youth in more deprived schools also described situations that were utterly unconducive to learning.

Participants spoke of disengaged teachers, the lack of basic amenities such as chairs and tables, unsafe and generally under-resourced schools, limited subject choices, and minimal or non-existent guidance on subject choice. Many of these young people were aware

of the negative effect of this situation on their possibility for upward mobility, already hindered by the levels of poverty in many of their households. Placed alongside the Youth Explorer statistics discussed earlier, it is clear that the Province would need to intervene urgently to enable youth to reach their full educational potential.

This situation is not unique to the WC. However, like elsewhere in South Africa where the problem of low-quality schooling may often seem insolvable, it is possible to consider a number of interventions that can begin to shift the situation for the better:

- *Improve the quality of teaching and learning for all.* The greatest efforts are clearly required in poorer areas, starting in the foundation phase or earlier, before learning deficits have grown to the current levels found in grade 9. Efforts have been made by the WCG through various academic after-school programmes that focus on maths and English tuition in low-resourced schools. These programmes include the Mass participation; Opportunity and access; Development and growth (MOD)

Year Beyond programme and pilot programmes in the After School Game Changer. However, the impact of these interventions is not yet clear. Once they have been tested, and some lessons learned, the programmes, or elements thereof, could be considered for roll out to a wider group of schools. It will be equally important to consider carefully whether other models applied across the country might be beneficial in the WC.

- Based on the participants' narratives, the following areas should be considered as a priority for stakeholders working to *improve the education system* in the Western Cape:

  - increased and dedicated support for teachers *and* school management working in less than optimal situations;

  - increased and better management of current resources for teaching, school management and educational equipment (starting with the basics of chairs, tables and windows, but preferably going further, to turn classrooms into places of inspiration – not desperation);

  - increasing teacher knowledge both on subjects as well as on pedagogics and teaching methods;

  - increasing subject choice and explaining to learners the impact of not being able to take a certain subject – so that their educational choices are as informed as possible;

  - instilling a culture of pride and passion for the teaching profession that sees teachers abandoning practices that are simply harmful for their learners;

  - regulations with regards to phone use in the classroom by teachers and learners need to be implemented and guarded; and

  - building connections between communities, families and schools, and creating schools that truly function

as safe spaces and guidance hubs for children and youth.

- *Remediate the large learning backlog among the current cohort of high-school learners* who attend schools in less affluent areas. This is a big task, but does not seem entirely impossible. There are indications of success by both small and larger-scale interventions such as the "AK Snapshots" Study Group[xii] in Michells Plain that helped to organise the FGDs there, and Ikamva Youth,[xiii] which runs peer-tutoring programmes in various communities across the country. There is, however, a lack of detailed understanding of the models of these programmes, and of evidence on what kinds of interventions and approaches are most successful at the high-school level, in resource-poor settings, and at what scale. A scoping exercise of national and international literature into existing programmes and their impact is therefore needed.

- *Post-school opportunities* should be created by supporting youth to write and pass their matric exam and find access to higher education, or to *high quality* technical and vocational training with a clear understanding of the pathways that education can offer them. For others it may be important to gain access to work and work experience opportunities.

- *Continue to explore investing substantially in the college sector* to expand access to, and improve completion rates in, TVET. In addition, it is critical to strengthen links between the TVET sector and employers to ensure that education and training lead to actual employment.

- In 2016, the Province launched the Apprenticeship Game Changer to create the necessary opportunities and pathways for individuals towards technical and vocational qualifications and employment. This involves – but goes beyond – the building of relationships

xii More on the AK Snapshots on the Mitchells Plain Facebook page: https://www.facebook.com/MPA.co.za/posts/10152391500612373

xiii http://ikamvayouth.org/

between employers and colleges. It will be important to *measure and understand the impact of the Province's Apprenticeship Game Changer programme* on young people's employment opportunities, and to adjust where necessary.

- *Clear and comprehensive career guidance* should be provided early in high school to guide subject choice and highlight post-school learning pathways and their relevance for upward social mobility. Provide the stepping stones that youth need to understand the route to their aspired futures. This includes, but is not limited to, ensuring access to clear and efficient information, guidance and support to make it easier for students to apply to colleges and universities.

- Understand the need to *provide comprehensive support* – including financial aid, academic and psycho-social support that can enable learners to stay the course.

Economic opportunities

Several of the older youth spoke about extended periods of joblessness and unsuccessful job searches, and therefore about the need for more 'opportunities'. This included the wish to gain work experience (even if unpaid voluntary work).

The PYDS recognises the need for 'improved connections between youth and jobs and links to work experience' (p. 6). Central to its approach is a subsidised work programme, as well as job intermediation and facilitation of access to first jobs, and, as mentioned earlier, connecting to pathways within or through the education system. However, many of the participants – both in the urban and rural areas – were not aware of any of the Province's interventions. Thus, ensuring a sufficient number of interventions close to where these youth live would be an important intervention.

In addition, youth-targeted communication strategies could be more effective by differentiating and gearing them towards youth at particular crucial moments in their trajectories – e.g. while they are still at school, or as they turn 18 and exit the child support grant system, or when they receive their matric certificate.

Going beyond the suggested programmes in the PYDS is also important; the WCG and other stakeholders working in the youth development sector should continuously consider innovative support measures such as travel vouchers, saving schemes and better access to clear information that can help young people access jobs. Although not all of this is the mandate of the Western Cape Government, relevant departments have an important role to play to lobby national government in these areas.

Of course, the success of all these initiatives depends largely on the number of jobs that are available for young people in the province, and the required skills levels. Motivating employers, particularly those providing entry-level and low-skilled jobs, to increase their demand for youth employees is thus important.

Lastly, but importantly, 'catering' for the bulk of young people who may *not* have written or passed their matric exams is imperative if we wish to avoid the majority of youth sliding into a more vulnerable position. Here it is critical to ensuring access to second chance education, or to the TVET system, where a matric qualification may not be a requirement to access opportunities for further learning.

The request for comprehensive support: prevention, protection and guidance

Key points

- All participants asked for facilities where they could 'keep busy' after school and during other free times.

- Boys and girls both asked for: easy-to-reach, safe and affordable social spaces; places or youth clubs where friends can meet and relax, resources can be accessed and support offered; clean parks; gym; theatre; cinema; continuity of programmes and stepping stones to better futures.

- Girls specifically asked for safe sports facilities for netball and swimming, fashion and arts-related activities.

- Facilities and services that are aimed at preventing further harm, protecting and healing from trauma were also requested, as were places or people that provide reliable, youth-relevant information and guidance, especially on education, health, and jobs or internships.

- Participants asked that services and support be offered in an informed manner and without judgement.

- An imperative is to support youth in their own agency, but also to connect them to mentors and role models.

- Supporting youth through the multiple deprivations they experience requires an understanding of the ways in which multiple deprivations work simultaneously to constrain young people's lives; there needs to be access to a basket of inter-related services that involves collaboration between various stakeholders.

- The implementation of these requires that young people get to identify the support they need; that the available community resources are well-understood and that this knowledge informs the design and maintenance of a centralised system of information; as well as clear and efficient inter-governmental communication and alignment of programmes and collaboration between various sectors.

- Youth Cafés and partnership sites are both likely candidates to become the type of place that can offer multifaceted support to the Province's youth, but more information is needed about their efficiency and the possibility of bringing additional services into those spaces without weakening their current offering and impact. Many more of these sites would be needed in all corners of the Province, and available to youth from adolescence to young adulthood.

Many of the participants clearly felt restricted and hurt by deprivation and its effects on their environments, yet they managed to articulate what they thought would help them create better lives, including what initiatives they would like to see. An overview of such interventions is provided in the next section.

Prevention: Safe, clean and easy-to-reach recreational facilities

All participants asked for facilities where they could 'do something' after school and during other free times. This was also presented as an antidote to the lure of gangsterism, early sexual debut or substance abuse. The sense of isolation was great, especially (but not only)

in the more rural areas. Current recreational facilities were described as either too far away (and therefore expensive and unsafe to travel to), non-existent, not sustained, or not youth relevant. Girls and young women in all groups were adamant that sports facilities were almost entirely focused on young men and did not offer them a chance to practise sports in adequately safe and well-equipped spaces. Leisure places like (safe) parks, gyms, swimming pools, cinemas, theatres, and malls were requested by all, as well as opportunities for further development.

Protection, healing and mentoring

Alongside the need for recreational facilities was the request for facilities and services that are aimed at further prevention of harm, protection and healing from trauma. These include the presence of trustworthy and protective police forces, and facilities to help young people deal with the trauma they and their families experience on a daily basis. The need for easy access to a psychologist was mentioned more than once, for both young women and young men (and in some cases for parents). This was seen as an intervention that could both prevent further harm and risk behaviour, and that could help young people and caregivers decide on a better, more positive way forward.

Finally, there was a clear request for places or people that would provide reliable information and guidance on 'being young' in general, and more specifically on education, health, and jobs or internships. Importantly, youth asked for these to be offered without judgement but in a way that shows understanding of their situation. Young women especially pointed out how they could take up some of these roles by establishing what one referred to as a 'sisterhood' to provide emotional support, share experiences, knowledge and information that could counter the prevailing sense of rivalry and fragmentation in the community. They were, however, clear about their own limitations to knowledge about the educational system, and opportunities to gain experience or find work.

It is therefore imperative for the Province to find ways to support youth in their own agency, but also to connect them to that of others, such as mentors and role models, who can provide the additional knowledge that they require.

Multi-faceted character of the deprivations requires multi-faceted interventions

The findings compellingly show that young people need support to deal with the multiple deprivations they experience in the different spheres of their lives. The barriers they may face in the one sphere intricately affect the opportunities they may have in the other. For interventions by the Province this means that gains made in one intervention are at risk of being wiped out by the set-backs in another. It is therefore important that the multitude of deprivations young people experience is reflected in interventions that the Province designs. In other words, interventions should be able to address more than one issue at a time. The implementation of such a 'basket of inter-related services' need not only be the responsibility of the WCG, but may again require a whole-of-society approach that involves collaboration between various stakeholders.

To succeed in this requires one consolidated approach to youth development that can offer young people support and advice in the areas where they feel they need it the most. This consolidation needs to exist both physically, in a safe and nourishing space that is easily accessible to youth, and conceptually, in a basket of services or support that recognises that these various deprivations work *simultaneously* to constrain young people's lives. Thus, a programme to 'provide parents with information about child development and teach skills to communicate and solve problems in non-violent ways'[57] may lead to a better understanding between parents and their adolescent youth. However, a single-faceted programme like this will do little to alleviate the impact of the deep levels of income poverty on these households, or the low quality of education in under-resourced

schools that are accessible to these young people.

Multi-faceted interventions have been shown to have stronger positive effects on young people's engagement in risk behaviour than single-focus interventions.[58] The ideal would be, then, to implement an intervention that helps young people identify the support they need and that connects them to a range of easily accessible and quality services.

In order to implement this kind of initiative, thorough understanding of the available community resources would be needed as well as the design and maintenance of a centralised system of information. It would also require clear and efficient inter-governmental communication and alignment of programmes, as well as collaboration between civil society, government and private sector stakeholders.

The concept of the WCG's Youth Cafés and partnership sites are both likely candidates to become the type of place that can offer multi-faceted support. However, for the WCG's goal to be met, many more of these partnership sites would be needed in all corners of the Province to ensure they are accessible to young people and are adequately integrated into the communities' social fabric. Facilities such as the Youth Cafés or partnership sites would need to be available for children at a younger age, and for all young people in the communities who feel they have a pressing issue they need help with. This may well be wide-ranging, from needing help with getting their identity document or birth certificate, to issues of severe abuse in the family, to health questions, or hunger. The sensitivity of many of the issues young people deal with requires them to receive support in a context that safeguards their privacy and is non-judgmental. This will allow young people to really ask for the help they need.
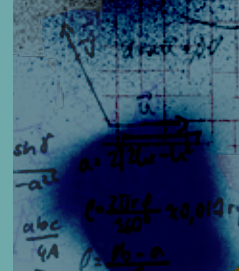
While the partnership sites seem like a step in the right direction, they would need to be capacitated to engage *actively* with young people and with the particularities of neighbourhoods' needs. More generally, they need to be ready to support young people in voicing their aspirations and their needs; to take a genuine interest in youth; and to provide help, support and a roadmap for young people to reach the life *they aspire to*.
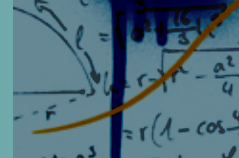
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$$\tan\varphi = \frac{A_1\sin\varphi_1 + A_2\sin\varphi_2}{A_1\cos\varphi_1 + A_2\cos\varphi_2}$$

$$\ell = r\left(1-\cos\frac{\varphi}{2}\right)$$

$$V = a^3 \qquad = \frac{a}{2}\tan\frac{\varphi}{4} \qquad s=\sqrt{abcd}$$

$$A = 6a^2$$

$$d = a\sqrt{3} \qquad s = \frac{1}{2}(a+b+c+d)$$

$$S = \sqrt{(s-a)(s-b)(s-c)(s-d)}$$

$$= -F_b - F_p + R_y \qquad m_3\ddot{y}_3 = -R_y$$