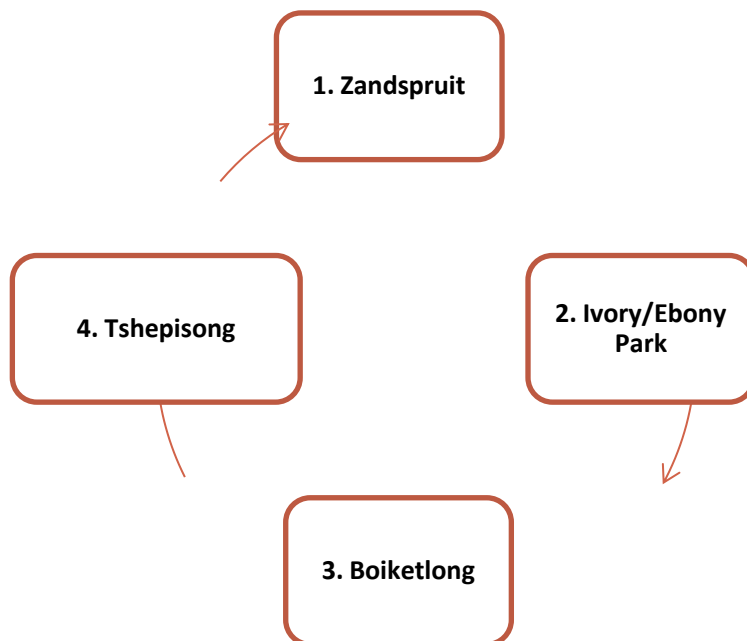




HURISA YOUTH PROJECT 2018
ADVANCING THE REALISATION OF SOCIOECONOMIC RIGHTS
IN VULNERABLE COMMUNITIES
PROGRESS REPORT (JUNE 2018)



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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

On Wednesday, 13 June 2018, the Human Rights Institute of South Africa (HURISA) held a partnership building workshop for the youth. The purpose of the meeting was to empower youth from vulnerable communities to advance and realise their social and economic rights. Youth representatives from the four communities of project focus attended, including the HURISA project team as well as experts involved in economic and social rights. The purpose of the meeting was to develop a relationship with the youth and the experts. The meeting also highlighted the nature of economic and socio challenges in the identified areas of interest. It was stressed by the Executive Director of HURISA, Ms Corlett Letlojane, that the youth of today have the potential to shape the world and that HURISA is here to support them in ensuring that youth empowerment is at the forefront of development to drive social and economic transformation. She encouraged the youth to make their mark from the communities they live in to empower themselves.

Young people in townships, informal settlements and rural communities still live in inhuman and degrading conditions that contradict the safeguarded Constitutional economic and social values. Issues of unemployment, crime, drug abuse and scourge of violence are what young people deal with on a daily basis in disadvantaged communities; and these are people that need to be prioritised on better living conditions if they are to shape the future of this country.

Area of project focus

We are particularly involved in four communities around Gauteng; which are Zandspruit, Ivory/Ebony Park, Tshepisong and Boiketlong and the focal points from these communities were established to work with us throughout the project.

Selection Criterion

A selection criterion was developed to enable our local partner organisation to identify relevant local focal points. We had initially selected to collaborate with our local partner Southern African Youth Project situated Diepsloot instead of Boiketlong. But the nominated focal point withdrew from the project due to lack of confidence in working in communities. However we are confident in building new relations in Diepsloot to ensure project impact in future. Diepsloot has been replaced with Boiketlong due to many social ills that were reported to be facing the area. We have also considered the Ivory Park focal point to involve communities in Ebony Park as they are situated in the same district. We have built a partnership with the focal points who will bring community activists and local municipals from their communities to also work with us on this project. Selection criterion is also attached for your records.

Focal Points and organisations

#	Name	Organisation	District	Province
1	Palesa Xakeka	Teach a Child Read	Zanspruit	Gauteng
2	Daniel Machesa	MSCEECC	Ivory Park	Gauteng
3	Keolepile Moleme	R2K	Tshepisoong	Gauteng
4	Simon Nwamba	Orange Farm Advice Centre	Boiketlong	Gauteng

Project Experts

The project identified organisations/institutions as experts such as SALGA, Premier's office, SERI, NYDA, CAOSA, SANEF, ICASA, South African Human Rights Commission (SAHRC), Commission for Gender Equality (CGE), Department of International Relations, Ikage Skills Development. These organisations/institutions are expected to empower youth with their programmes for uplifting youth with economic and social rights opportunities to be agents of change in their communities and to participate in public affairs.

Economic and social rights situation in four areas of the project

2. ZANDSPRUIT (JOHANNESBURG NORTH)



Zandspruit is a township in the North of the City of Johannesburg, Region C. According to the youth living in this community, Zandspruit is characterized by high levels of unemployment, lack of proper housing, and health care. They have also emphasised a general lack of basic service delivery and the proliferation of informal settlements. They also experience threats and brutal attacks when they form and/or join civil society organisations, trade unions of their choice or aligning themselves with political issues and raising their concerns on maladministration in governance.

3. IVORY/EBONY PARK (JOHANNESBURG EAST)



Ivory Park is a highly populated area in the North-East of Johannesburg, Region 2. The youth from this community mentioned that the settlement is plagued by myriad socio-economic challenges, including illiteracy, child-headed households and hopelessness. There is a battery of social ills, like drug and alcohol abuse, peer pressure and petty crime. They also emphasised issues such as shortage of schools and libraries, a general lack of service delivery as well as unfinished projects by the government. They mentioned that the streets are sometimes flooded with effluent as a result of poorly maintained water and sewage infrastructure combined with overpopulation. The growth of Ivory Park has created social problems, such as the growth of informal settlements, backroom shacks, poverty and unemployment.

4. BOIKETLONG (JOHANNESBURG SOUTH)



Boiketlong is a large informal settlement outside Sebokeng in Johannesburg South. The youth living in this community have mentioned that the most common issues they experience is water and basic sanitation. Residents are experiencing a serious backlog of water supply and sanitation. They have no proper sanitation facilities, and the ones they have in the settlement are self-constructed, simple pit latrines without ventilation. In terms of water supply, residents of Boiketlong informal settlement rely on a few communal taps in the area which do not work properly. Lack of electricity is also a big issue in Boiketlong, as well as proper housing and health facilities.

5. TSHEPISONG (JOHANNESBURG WEST)



Tshepisoong is a small township located next to Vlakfontein in the West of Johannesburg. The main social and economic issues that were raised by the youth from this community include high unemployment rate amongst youth, drug abuse, poor infrastructure around the area – which is mostly caused by lack of communication amongst local government and community members. They also mentioned lack of opportunities for youth as a huge challenge in Tshepisoong; such as recreational activities.

6. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the youth, together with HURISA project team engaged on a plan of action and effective strategies for sustainable measures to deal with these human and societal problems persisting amongst the youth within their communities. These include conducting baseline research to investigate and find out what is the nature of social and economic challenges amongst the youth in these communities, to conduct community workshops and educate the youth about social and economic rights, to encourage a collective responsibility including local municipality to deal with issues of corruption, crime, drug abuse and lack of opportunities for the youth. Furthermore, the youth and the project also mentioned the importance of involving local organisations, religious groups and local charities in fostering change to these communities.

This generation of youth stands at the border-line of oppression and transformation, and until their social and economic needs are fulfilled then the transformation and reconstruction will not be sustained. The task of improving young people's lives in the rural areas, townships, informal settlements must remain a collective commitment by all in South Africans, including state institutions, communities, corporations, traditional and religious sectors. And until these issues are addressed and protection provided for the youth, they remain disempowered and demotivated to become the forces of change and development in this country.