

Successful Community Development Projects

Passport to Future Case Study

Developed for the IAIA 2015 International Conference in Florence, Italy

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Abstract

Infrastructure development projects generally involve the development of community benefit projects, such as corporate social investment (CSI) projects. This poster addresses questions of how to identify a project that is feasible to all parties concerned, how to correctly identify beneficiaries without causing friction with those who will not directly benefit from the project and how to implement a project having all the required stakeholders on board. These questions are answered using the case study of a CSI project, Passport to Future (P2F), for a pipeline development. The P2F project is benefitting youth from several rural villages in the Sekhukhune District, which is situated in the Limpopo Province of South Africa, by providing them with tools and skills to access employment in the District. It is being implemented by Bapuleng Social Resources on behalf of the Trans Caledon Tunnel Authority (TCTA), which is undergoing phase 2 of the Olifants River Water Resources Development Project (ORWRDP) in the Greater Tubatse Local Municipality (GTLM).

Introduction

The project is situated in the GTLM, which is largely dependent on the mining and quarrying sector. This sector creates several economic spin-offs, such as the construction of support infrastructure, such as roads, housing and water infrastructure. These developments provide opportunities for local people to be employed. This is particularly important in light of the high level of poverty and unemployment in the GTLM (45.5%).

This poster outlines the methodology that was derived for developing the P2F project. The methodology is described below as a series of steps and objectives with corresponding actions taken and conclusions drawn.



Passport to Future recipients proudly showing off their certificates at their graduation ceremony. Recipients are accompanied by the project coordinator, Jimmy Mnisi (far left).

Methodology applied

STEP 1

Objective

Develop intimate knowledge of the project stakeholders and their social circumstances.

What we did / concluded

We had been working on the ORWRDP for two years prior to starting the CSI project, focusing mainly on resettlement, associated stakeholder engagement and managing all social functions. This provided sufficient insight and background to undertake the project.

STEP 2

Objective

Identify the largest needs and complaints in the affected community by means of:

- Reviewing and reflecting on the needs and complaints highlighted by communities
- Prioritising the issues that will be of greatest concern to communities and the client

What we did / concluded

- Relied on memory and experience to tease out issues
- Reviewed specialists reports of the ORWRDP (EIA/RAP, Socio-economic studies) and minutes of previous stakeholder meetings where social problems and needs were raised

The following issues were concluded

- There appeared to be little, largely short term employment benefits for communities in the project area and surrounds
- Infrastructure development needs were identified by communities, such as the building of schools and clinics. These were already being supported by other companies, including TCTA, and were therefore not considered further. The CSI project needed to have long term impact as opposed to once-off construction activities.

STEP 3

Objective

Develop a set of assumptions as to why the needs and complaints exist.

What we did / concluded

As in step 2, a combination of project experience and desktop information reviews were applied.

The following assumptions were concluded:

- Communities appeared unaware of the standard procedures involved in applying for a job which made it difficult to take advantage of the job opportunities
- Many people have had some kind of informal employment and this is their primary point of reference
- Education levels amongst the population are low
- There is a sense of entitlement created by political factions

It was concluded that a project enabling people to find employment might be most beneficial.

STEP 4

Objective

Develop a research question around the priority issues and assumptions raised so far.

What we did / concluded

The following research question was concluded:

- How can a CSI project of the ORWRDP project be of value to its impacted communities since it is also an infrastructure development project that has the potential to support local employment and associated benefits to local communities?



Above: The Passport to Future project was officially launched by the Executive Mayor of Sekhukhune District, Councillor David Magabe.

Directly above: Present at the official opening was the ORWRDP project manager, Mr Ntsoli Maiketso.

Acknowledgements

- Trans-Caledon Tunnel Authority
- Aurecon Ndodana Joint Venture
- Basil Read

Further information

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Methodology applied cont...

STEP 5

Objective

Use defensible methods to analyse a set of social variables that will answer the research question.

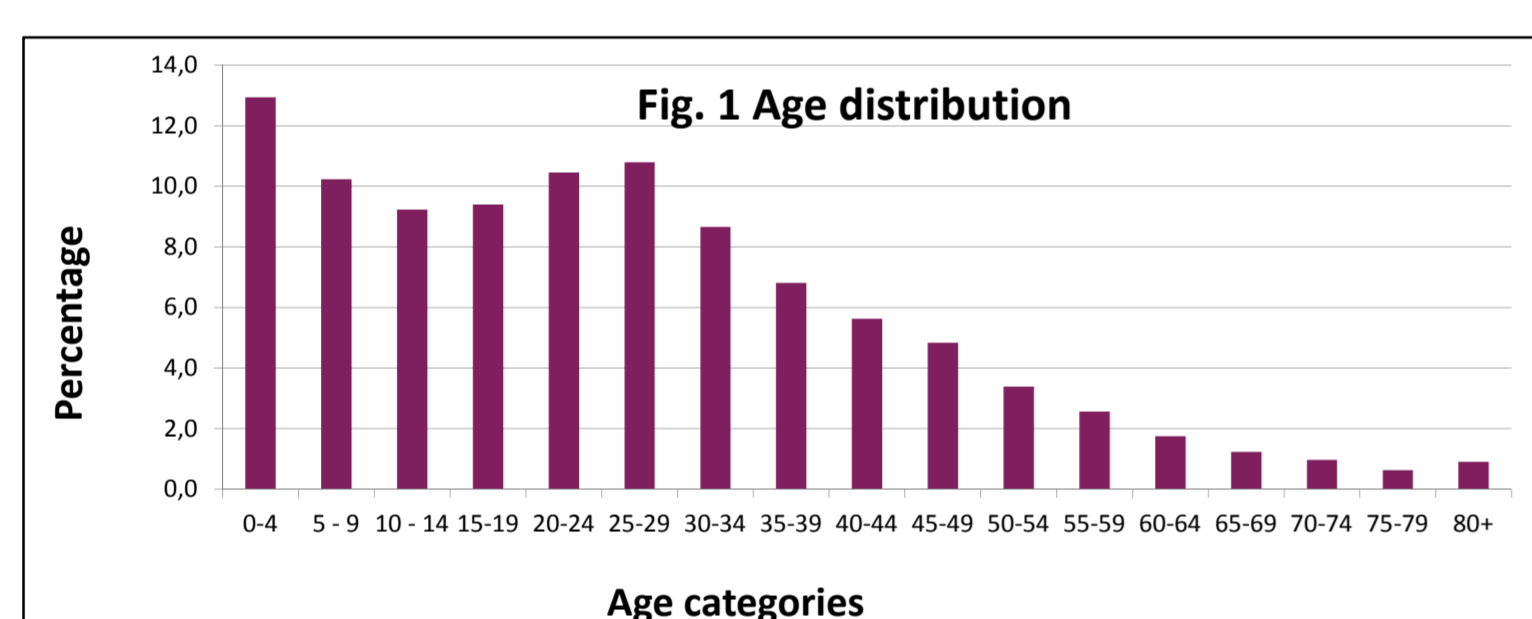
What we did / concluded

The following methods were used:

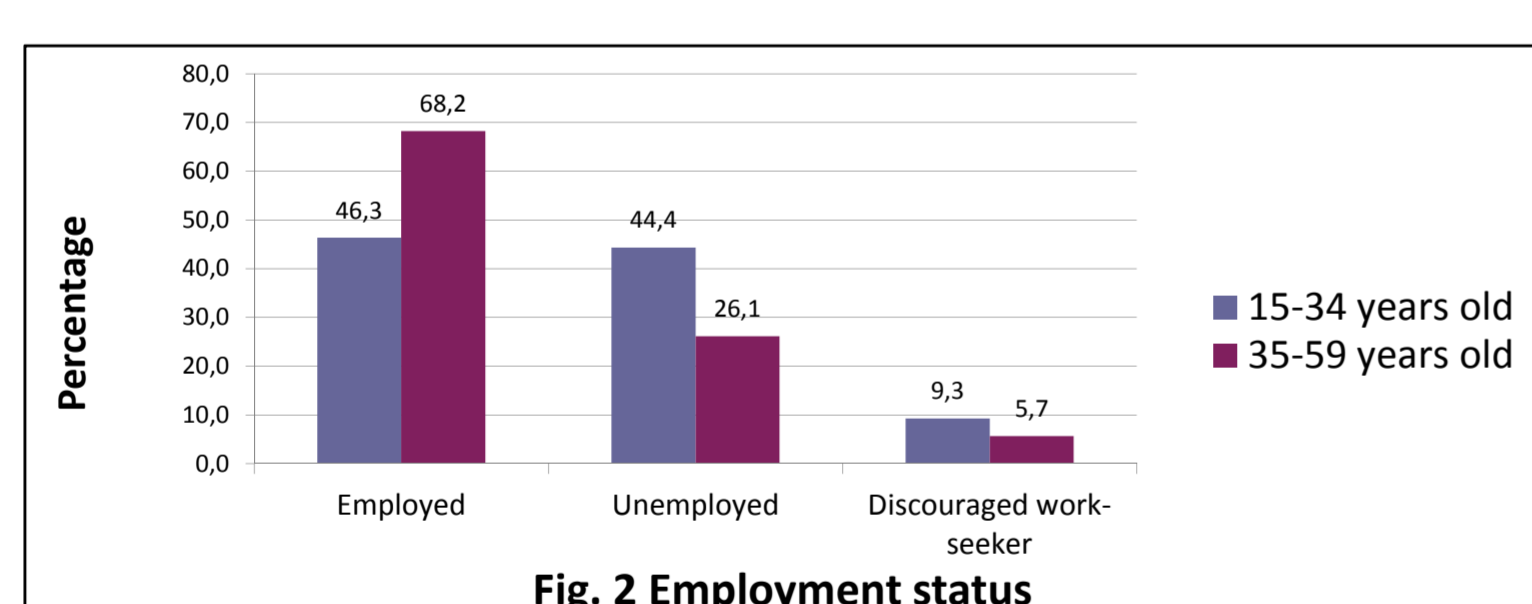
- Reviewed and analysed census data in order to test our assumptions. This highlighted how big the problems are, and whether they were significant enough to warrant a CSI project.
- Developed a baseline overview of the impacted area on the basis of the statistical data.

Research results

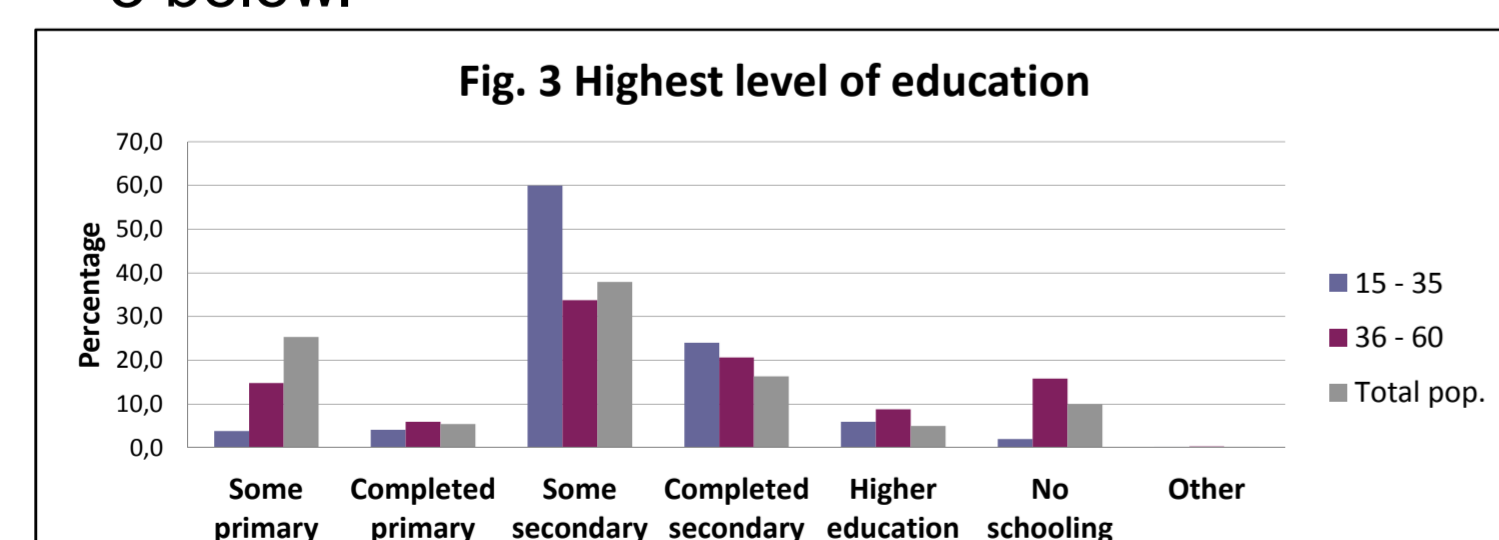
- Who should benefit (a)?**: 32.4% are aged 0 to 14; 39.3% are aged 15 to 34 (youth), 23.2% are aged 35 to 59; 5.5% are aged 60 and older. The population was considered to be youthful. See Figure 1 below.



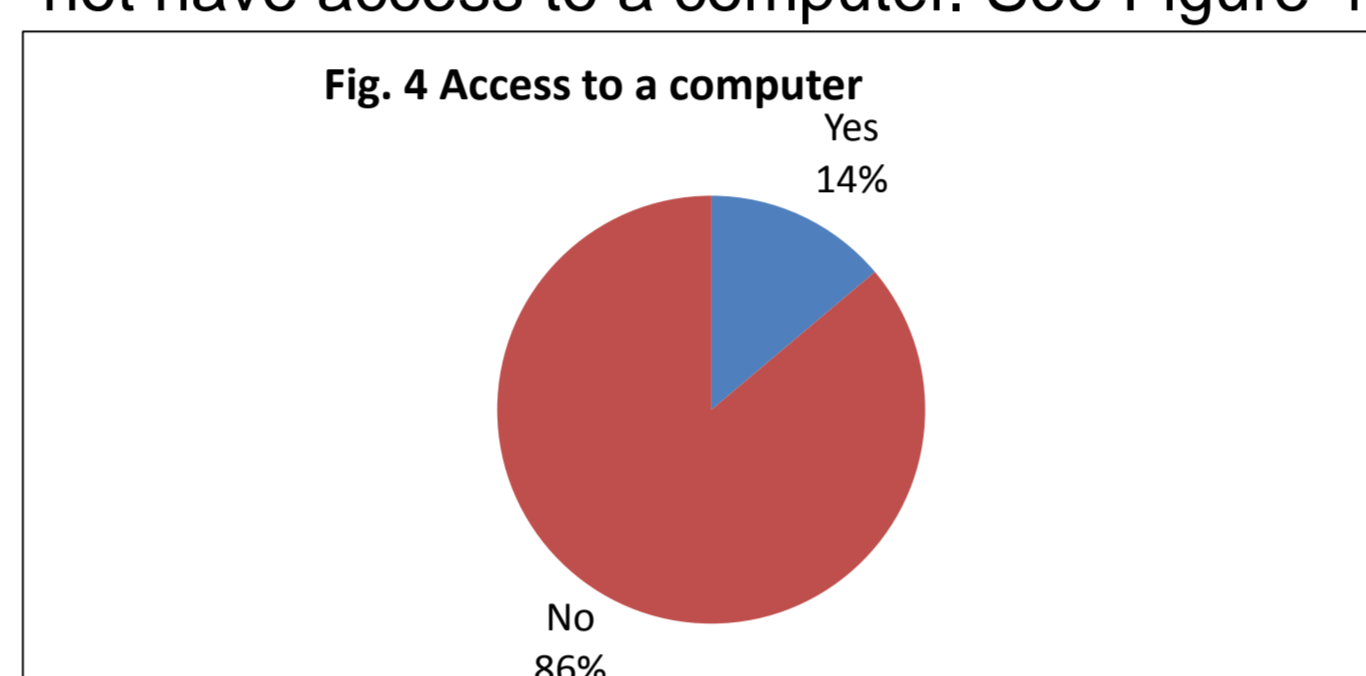
- Who should benefit (b)?**: More youth (44.4%) are unemployed than their older counterparts (26.1%). See Figure 2 below.



- At what level should training/mentorship be pitched?**: education levels are higher amongst youth than the rest of the population over the age of 20; 24% of youth have Grade 12 and 6% have higher education versus 16.3% and 5% amongst the entire population. See Figure 3 below.



- Exposure to formal employment**: 23% each of youth and those aged 35 to 59 is employed in the informal sector and 7.5% of each is employed in private households.
- Exposure to standard tools required in the workplace (a)**: Most of the population does not have access to a computer. See Figure 4.



- Exposure to standard tools required in the workplace (b)**: Most of the population has no access to the internet. See Table 1 below.

Source of internet access	Percentage
From home	4,6
From cell phone	11,9
From work	2,8
From elsewhere	3,8
No access to internet	76,9
Total	100

STEP 6

Objective

From the baseline findings develop a case for why the CSI project should go ahead.

What we did / concluded

The following project rationale was derived:

- The municipality is booming with economic opportunities, yet local people continue to be largely unemployed. This is largely due to low levels of education, limited exposure to a formal work environment and lack of experience using basic workplace tools such as a computer and the internet. Youth should be the project beneficiaries because they comprise the largest age and unemployed cohort of the economically active population.

STEP 7

Objective

Use the baseline findings to develop the project activities.

What we did / concluded

- The baseline revealed that our assumptions were largely accurate.
- This enabled us to develop the following CSI project objective, which is: To provide youth job-seekers with human resources and tools to improve their chances of finding work.

This further prompted us to derive the following project components:

- CV development** - Recipients attend training workshops and are mentored through the process of developing a CV and covering letter.
- Preparation for job interviews** – Workshops are conducted with small groups of recipients to show them how job interviews should be conducted.
- Guidance on training requirements** - Professionals working in the main economic sectors of the municipal area provide talks about career opportunities and educational requirements.
- Relevant computer training** – Training on how to search for jobs on the internet and how to use email.
- Job placements** – Recipients are assisted to find jobs.
- Project management and monitoring** – This is to ensure that the above-mentioned components have all the resources to fulfil their objectives. This includes regular monitoring and evaluation during and after the project.

Conclusion and outcomes

The P2F project was systematically developed using statistical data, specialist experience and documented evidence to ensure that the rationale for the project was defensible. This was critical because of the social complexities in the project area and the associated need to ensure fairness and transparency. Analysis of the demographics, education levels and employment status determined who the project recipients should be. Along with determining access to technological facilities, these variables also determined at what level the training programmes should be pitched.

Over three hundred youth enrolled in the P2F project and 261 completed the programme within one year. Employment and training opportunities have been secured for 37 and 24 participants respectively. Participants will be registered with employment agencies who will assist them further to secure work.

The project comes to an end in April 2015.

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