

Northern Suburbs Street Children’s Meeting

7th February 2017

9:30 - 11:30

Durbanville Council Chambers

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Present: Nick Van Rooyen (TEAHMO), Wilma Piek (VRCID), Stacey Doorley-Jones (2ND Chance Trust), Susan Farrell (Farrell Consulting), Elzanne Basson (Badisa), Maritha Roukema (Durbanville CPF), Gerrie Smith (NEW LIFE), Theresa Uys (COCT), Melissa Weber (COCT), Leon Brynard (Vredekloof CID), Bijou Dakole (El Theos), Nontombi Ngogodo (DSD Metro North), Veronica Geduld (VRCID), Jacque Pietersen (VRCID), Colleen Brookes-Gain (WCSCF)

Apologies: Janice King (WCSCF), Juanita Beukes (Badisa Trio)

1. **Welcome and introductions**. Nick welcomed everyone.
2. **Guest speaker Laura Bergh, Poverty Stoplight SA**

The Poverty Stoplight Office (SA), incubated under The Clothing Bank, but as of November 2016 has now spun off as a separate legal entity. The Poverty Stoplight Office now runs as an independent non-profit company (NPC), in collaboration with the founder, Martin Burt, CEO of Fundación Paraguay. In 2014, The Clothing Bank, an already highly successful social enterprise, customised and localised this Paraguayan-based tool for a South African context and integrated the approach into their development cycle. They built a new change framework that has informed the organisation on the way forward, with huge success. The Clothing Bank is wholly committed to this approach and wanted to share their experience with other non-profits, social enterprises and interested parties in order to transfer knowledge and replicate success across South Africa.

Poverty Stoplight is not about a hand-out, but a hand up. It is an approach that helps people **progress out of poverty by** empowering them to understand and map their own choices. It allows families to self-diagnose their level of poverty and quality of life. Few programmes have a methodology or metric for impact assessment that can categorically prove that they are meeting their mandates. The majority of outcomes and impacts for poverty-related programmes are measured using income generation or household costs as the main indicators and there has been little effort to use M & E tools beyond the traditional money-metric method. Traditional methods do not take into consideration all the dimensions of poverty, which results in the watered-down delivery of poverty reduction rather than poverty eradication.

To understand a problem from all standpoints, it is necessary to include the valid perspectives of everybody involved – ie: the family in poverty, the community, the social activist, the non-profit attempting to provide support, the micro-finance institution, the social entrepreneur, the government agency, the international donor, etc. **We need to contrast poverty with non-poverty** and then take action to address the difference. We need to understand that the families can be **motivated to pull themselves out of poverty**.

The tool uses stoplight colours that enable the poor to see and understand the **ways in which they are poor.**

The surveys assess poverty levels using 50 indicators grouped into **6 dimensions of poverty**:

* Income and employment
* Health and environment
* Housing and infrastructure
* Education and culture
* Organisation and participation
* Inferiority and motivation

And for every one of the 50 indicators, there are **three status conditions**:

1. Red = very poor
2. Yellow = poor
3. Green = not poor

Facilitators trained in the Poverty Stoplight conduct household visits and create a safe space for the family to share sensitive information and ensure that the family is prepared to answer all questions as honestly as possible.

The family completes a survey, on paper or using the online software developed for Android devices, by selecting the definition for each indicator that most reflects the family’s current circumstances. The result is a **Poverty Stoplight Scorecard** that is easy to understand and use in follow-up processes.

The results allows each low-income family to reflect, prioritise and plan how to resolve the poverty-related problems that affects their family, with the assistance of organisations that have competencies relating to each indicator, via a referral pathway.

As families systematically work on moving their issues of poverty from red to green, regular application of this survey allows for more comprehensive measurement and mapping of social and cultural wealth, which until now has been a challenge for the development sector.

Data can be aggregated and mapped using online geo-referencing, offering a better perspective of the real issues at hand in specific areas of the country, and scaling for a national snapshot in time.

These maps can enhance decision-making for government services such as electricity and sanitation and can influence priorities for engagement. Similarly, the corporate social investment sector could use these maps to **identify the issues of greatest need within their geographical footprint.**

Organisations delivering social impacts through poverty-related programmes, enterprise development initiatives and upliftment and empowerment community-based projects will benefit greatly from Poverty Stoplight.

**The Poverty Stoplight approach is a relational tool that creates expectations in those being surveyed. Membership and usage of the tool is only endorsed for those organisations who are actually running poverty-elimination programmes and who intend to use the information resulting from the surveys to do something about it. Using the tool for research purposes only or where data generation is the main outcome is not endorsed.**

Members receive the following support and service:

1. The survey tool and upgrades, as developed and localised for the South African context.
2. Induction training on the tool and metrics
3. Database of facilitators trained to work with the PS survey tool
4. Online technology platform as provided by Hewlett Packard and managed by the founder
5. Data and information shared via the Poverty Stoplight SA website
6. A Poverty Stoplight Forum that meets every 3-4 months to discuss learning’s, insights and impacts
7. Access to the Referral Pathway Network
8. Access to the Global Poverty Stoplight Network

**The benefits of the Poverty Stoplight and Forum include**:

* A collaborative space for organisations working to eradicate poverty in South Africa
* Enables organisations to measure outcomes against a common framework
* Aggregation of data which offers a better perspective of the real issues at hand
* The more policy-relevant information there is available on poverty, the better equipped policy-makers will be to reduce it
* Referral pathways that will ultimately inform stakeholders of priority areas for engagement
* The establishment of a community of practice
* Enabling organisations to collectively engage in the evolution of a tool that is gaining traction in Africa.

**The Poverty Stoplight Office is committed to being**:

* An advocate for the role of people who are sociology-economically disadvantaged in taking control of their own lives
* Pro-choice
* Enabling and catalytic
* Unbiased to and independent of members’ programmes
* Transparent

#www.povertystoplight.org#

***Discussion following feedback***

How long the facilitator training? 6 hours.

Laura to send the presentation to Janice for distribution to those who attended.

1. **Next meeting**: 18th April 2017