

# PHILIPPI AND THE INNOVATION HUB

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[CREDIT: IL-HAAM PETERSEN]

*A visual storytelling reflection on challenges, strengths  
and opportunities for building local capabilities*

# ABOUT THIS **BOOKLET**

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“Start where people  
are. Then move  
and grow together!”

This was the key message from the community members who participated in our initial stakeholder workshop in Philippi in November 2017. They emphasised that people in the township are doing things for themselves: they have agency. Also, people in Philippi wanted universities and researchers to recognise people’s agency, and co-produce knowledge with them.

We listened and we made a serious attempt to do the research differently.



In December 2018, we worked with a group of people in Philippi to tell their own stories about life and work in the township. Through photography and storytelling, the group reflected on the challenges they face in trying to forge a better life for themselves and others in their community. They reflected on the hope and opportunities presented by the Philippi Innovation Hub. But they also identified a sense of mistrust and disconnect between the Hub and the 'average person' in Philippi. The group produced a set of photo-stories based on their personal experiences of engaging with the Hub. The photo-stories bring attention to how they benefit from the Hub as well as the challenges people face in accessing resources at the Hub.

The purpose of this booklet is to share the Philippi group's photo-stories, with the group, and with a wider audience within and beyond the geographical boundaries of the township.

*These stories are personal. They matter.*



# THE PHOTO-STORYTELLERS

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**ZIKHONA MADUBELA**

Zikhona is a co-founder of Street Side Bakery – a bakery that specialises in ‘lactose-free biscuits’ – and also co-founder of Arts Beat Crime – an organisation in Khayelitsha that promotes safe spaces for artists and youth mentorship.



**NTOMBOZUKO KRAAI**

Ntombozuko is the founder of a social innovation initiative, African Women Rising, targeting young women aged 15-24. She is a feminist and women’s rights activist with an interest in sexual reproductive health and rights.



**LUVUYO GOBOZA**

Luvuyo is a musician and co-founder of two Khayelitsha-based organisations: Street Side Bakery and Arts Beat Crime.



**NONKOSI MGWEXA**

Nonkosi is a Philippi Brotherhood Project Liaison Officer, which helps develop young male role models within the community, for them to be future leaders.



SINAZO **PETER**

Sinazo is a graduate from Big Fish Film Making Academy. She is a community developer, film maker, and entrepreneur.



LUSANDA **SOBOYISE**

Lusanda is an artist who sings, writes poetry, draws and loves acting. She also likes to explore, seek knowledge, and learn.



NONTUTHUZELO **NIMGI**

Nontuthuzelo is a cleaning products and clothing entrepreneur in Philippi. She is passionate about business and has recently started a catering company with a group of women in Philippi.



THOMAS **FIHLA**

Thomas is a lecturer and consultant in the information technology and business industry. He is a co-founder of EdTech company, VISAR, and specialises in software engineering, content development, and cyber security.



DUMISANI **NCUBENI**

Dumisani is a UCT alumnus and co-founder of an EdTech start-up, VISAR. He is an advocate of education and improving the lives of people through education.

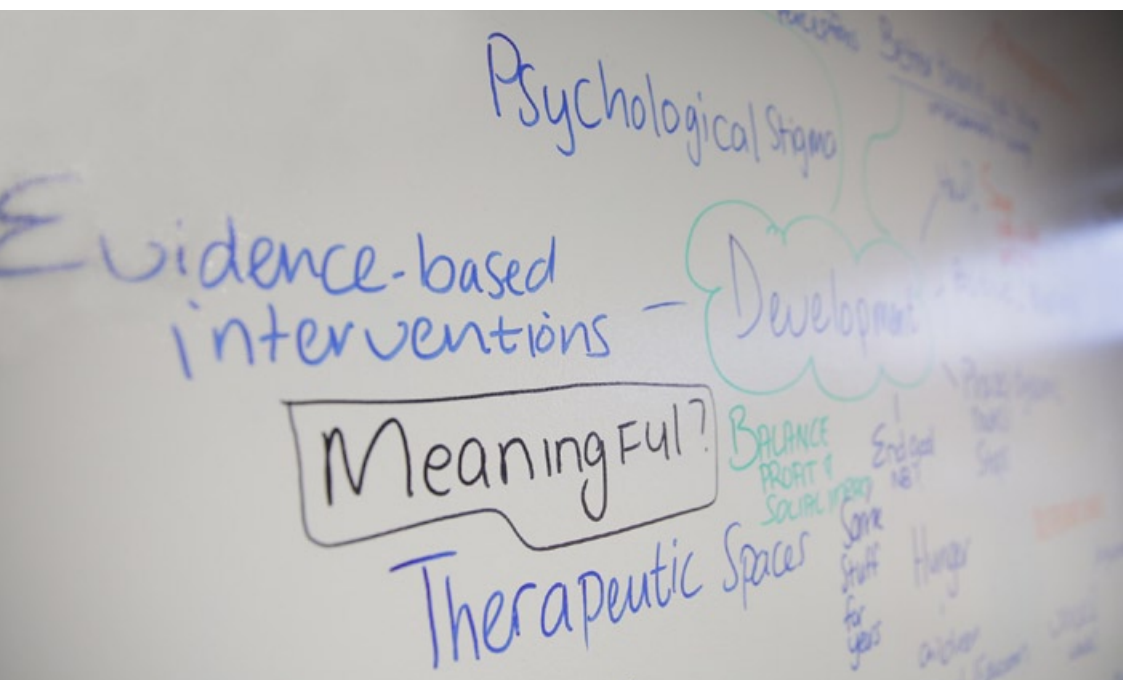


BUKELWA **SONAMZI**

Bukelwa is a founder and director of the Women's Healing Center, a social innovation start-up. She has more than 20 years of experience in community development.

# MAKING THE PHOTO-STORIES

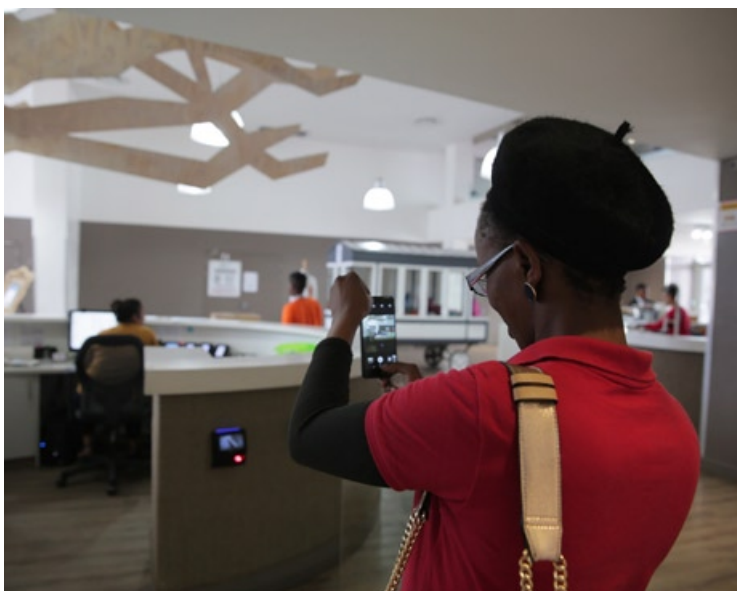
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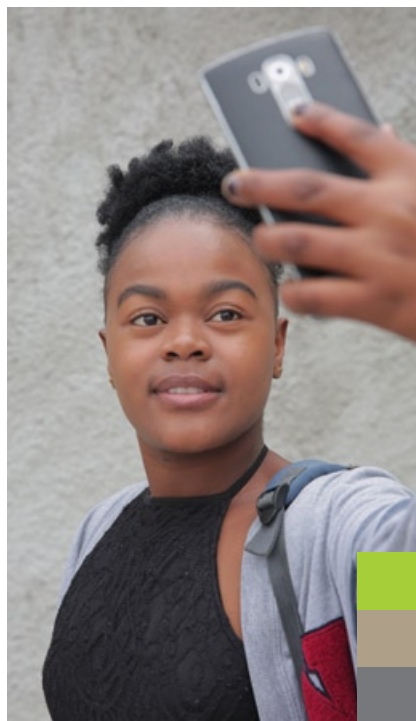
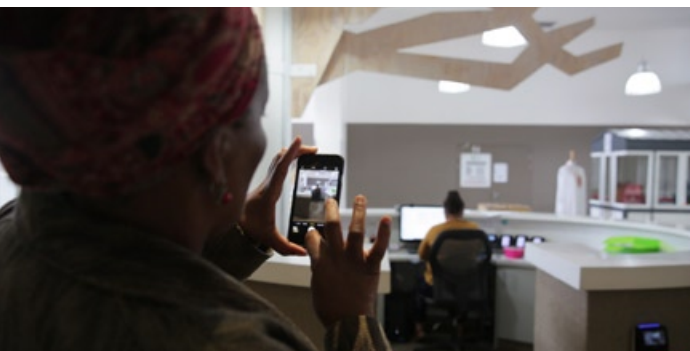


**VOICING  
OUR  
INDIVIDUAL  
AND  
**COLLECTIVE  
EXPERIENCES  
THROUGH  
**PHOTOGRAPHS******

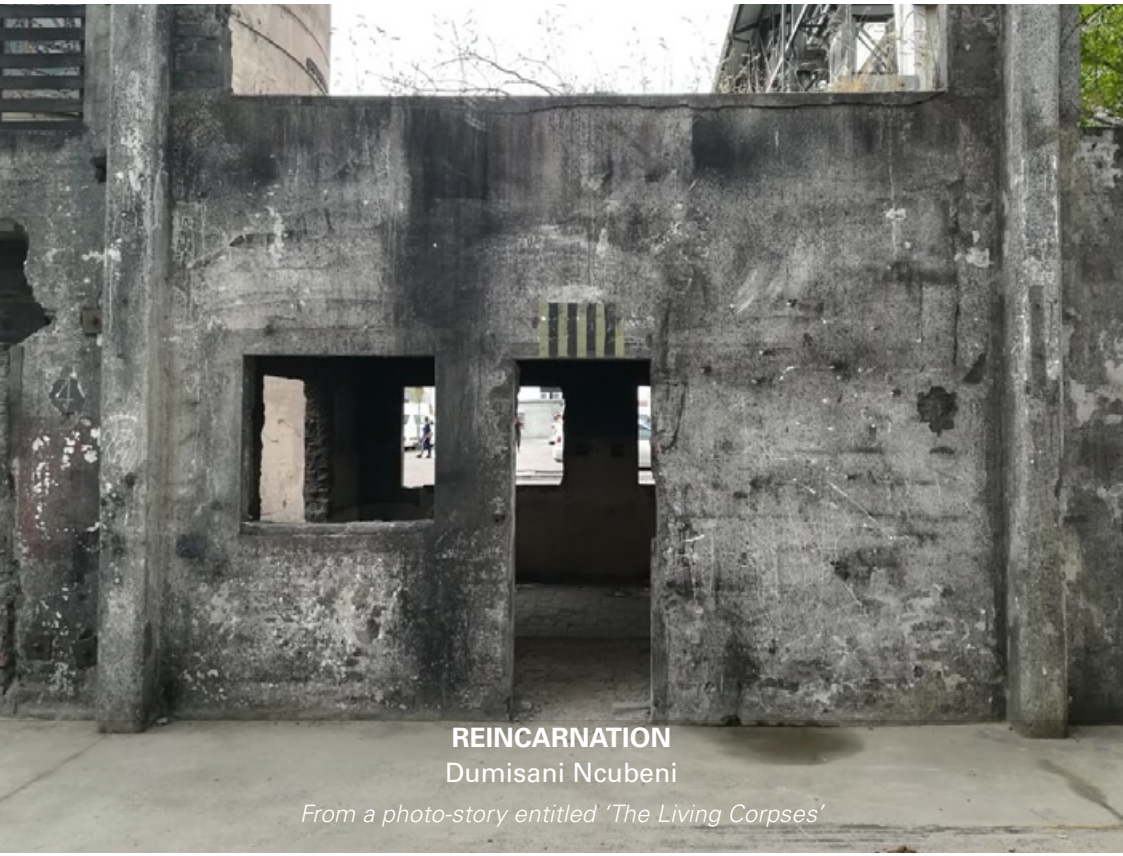
GUIDING QUESTION:

*If you want to  
grow livelihoods  
in Philippi,  
how does the  
Innovation Hub  
help you?*





# REINCARNATION



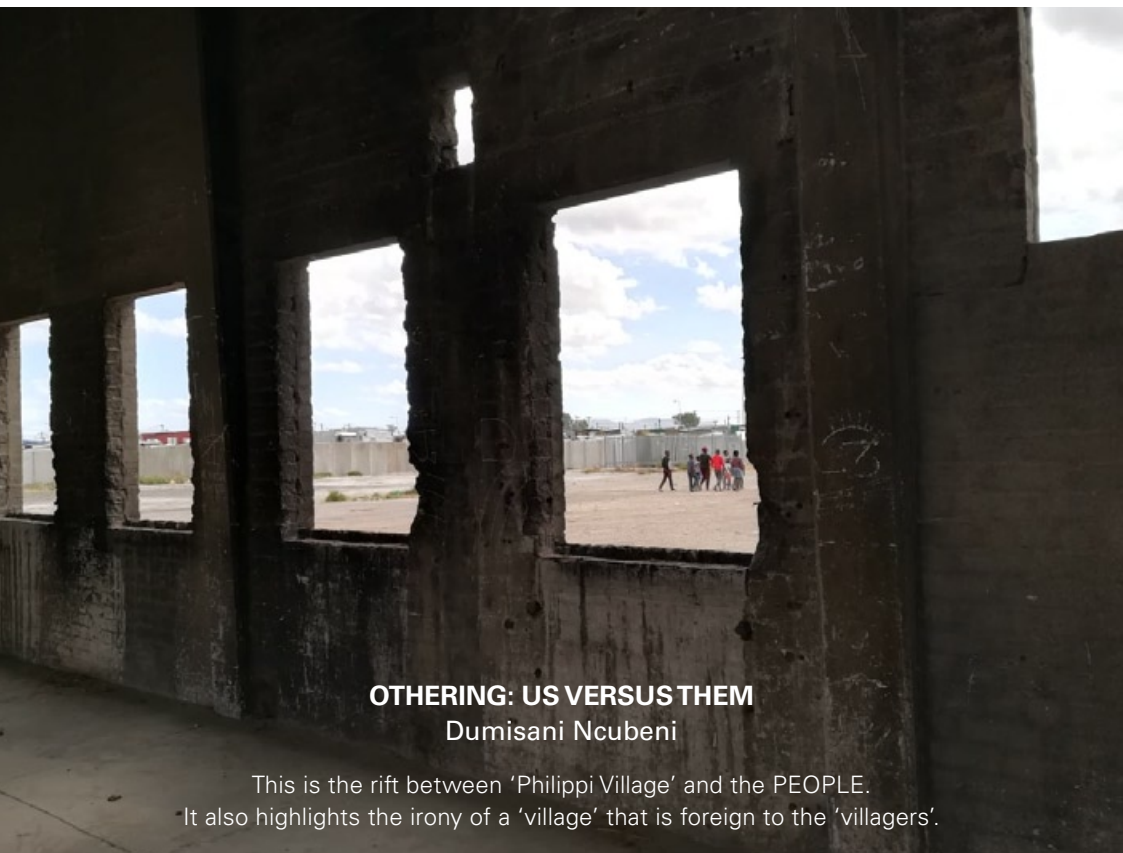
## REINCARNATION Dumisani Ncubeni

*From a photo-story entitled 'The Living Corpses'*



## ANCESTRAL CEREMONY: OLD MEETS THE NEW Dumisani Ncubeni

The old cement factory and the new Philippi Village.



**OTHERING: US VERSUS THEM**  
Dumisani Ncubeni

This is the rift between 'Philippi Village' and the PEOPLE.  
It also highlights the irony of a 'village' that is foreign to the 'villagers'.

“Tourists or whoever visits Philippi get scared. They don't feel safe. They feel sorry for people in Philippi. That's how I see the Philippi Innovation Hub. To me, it's like a tourist that came out of nowhere.”

- Sinazo Peter

# DISCONNECT BETWEEN THE HUB & PHILIPPI



## SCARCITY

Bukelwa Sonamzi

Some spaces are there but are not available  
or accessible to be used by the average person.

*From a photo-story entitled 'Need for Collaborative Learning in Philippi'*



**#StepOutOfYourComfortzone**  
Zikhona Madubela

These cars represent a means of transport to get to the space.  
It is costly for people from outside, from other townships, to travel.

*From a photo-story entitled  
'#BlackChildYouCanMakeItWithTheOpportunitiesAroundYou'*



## **AFFORDABILITY**

Nonkosi Mgwexa

People doing business opposite, and on the borders, of Philippi Hub. There isn't the same hustle and bustle at Philippi Hub. Businesses may not know about the opportunities to rent a container or are excluded because of the rent and paperwork.

*From a photo-story entitled 'Scarcity to the Community'*



## INFORMAL TRADER SHARING

Nontuthuzelo Nimgi

This is a picture of people who are sharing trading space.  
But the issue is that the management of Philippi Business Village do not allow that.  
For me, I think the thing of sharing a container can work for each one of us,  
so we can be able to pay the rent and make a profit.

*From a photo-story entitled 'Space not affordable for small business owners'*



## ACCESS

Nonkosi Mgwexa

When you go to Philippi Village you see this business banner/billboard. There is none showing the local Philippi organisations.



## WHO IS PHILIPPI?

Sinazo Peter

Every time I walk past this picture I ask myself, 'What makes you Philippi?'

*From a photo-story entitled 'My battery is getting lower'*

# ACCESS TO KNOWLEDGE, RESOURCES & OPPORTUNITIES



## INNOVATIVE RECYCLED ART Thomas Fihla

An art sculpture made from waste steel material recycled by an artist.  
It represents second chances, innovative thinking and alternative means of income.

*From a photo-story entitled 'Breaking the Glass Wall'*



## VOICE

Luvuyo Goboza

Gives people a voice, a platform to voice their opinions, talk about their experiences and get help.

*From a photo-story entitled 'Informative'*

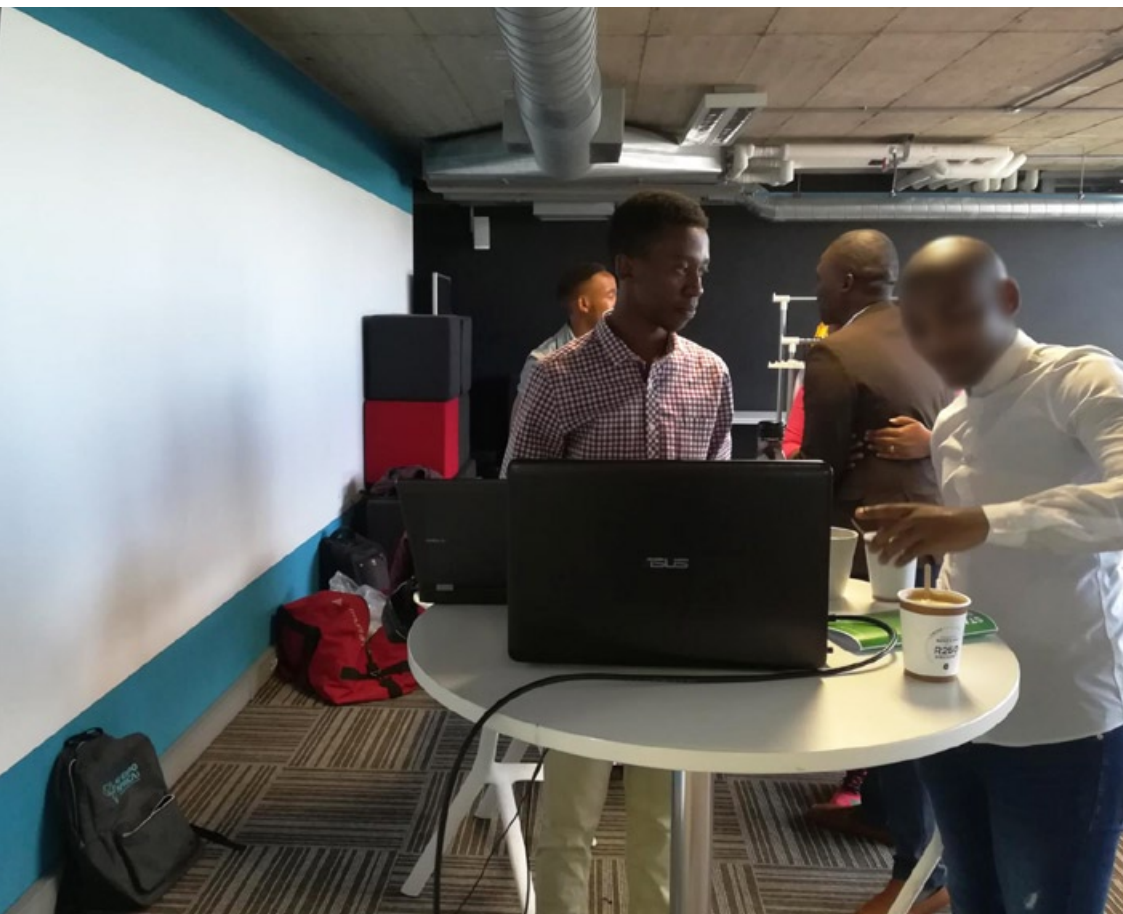


## BACK OF PHILIPPI

Ntombozuko Kraai

High walls in front. Inside is different. Lots of things are happening. Inclusion of everyone. Access to the space. Lots of people, including young women, do not know what is happening and what resources are available inside.

*From a photo-story entitled 'Umrhabulo'*



## **INSIDE THE INNOVATION HUB**

Thomas Fihla

Young people and local entrepreneurs are engaging as part of an incubation programme. An encouraging space for local entrepreneurs to access resources, meet others and network to push their businesses.



## **YOU GROOM ME, I GROOM OTHERS**

Lusanda Soboyise

A place where I can get help to find more information.  
Help finding a job online. Help to help others.

*From a photo-story entitled 'The Start of a New Journey'*



## WORKING SPACE

Bukelwa Sonamzi\*

Free space for working and also available for meeting at the UCT Solution Space when management allows it, so you won't get chased out.

## #BlackChildYouCan

Zikhona Madubela\*

Open space for opportunities to unlock potential for previously disadvantaged communities.

\*This photograph was conceptualised, captured and captioned by Bukelwa Sonamzi and Zikhona Madubela.

# CONCLUSION

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Township innovation hubs have the potential to bring important knowledge resources closer to people in townships.

Philippi, like many townships in South Africa, is a vibrant and dynamic place. People in Philippi are enterprising but they also face huge socio-economic challenges.

The photo-stories in this booklet show how the Innovation Hub in Philippi makes it possible for informal traders, start-ups, NGO workers, artists and students from the township to access incubation programmes, business management short courses, expert business mentorship as well as coaching, career services, computers and free internet.

A range of small business development services are now within reach. Africa's best business school is now within reach!

A major challenge for the Hub is to bring about a sense of belonging so that the average person living and working in Philippi feels welcome to use the space and make it their own.



## **THIS IS PHILIPPI**

**Sinazo Peter**

This is what we see about Philippi.  
It's kind of busy, but at the same time there's that fancy life hidden in Philippi.  
Philippi can be beautiful if you dig deeper.

# RECOMMENDATIONS

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The photo-stories show how a group of informal traders, start-ups, NGO workers, artists and students from Philippi benefited from the resources provided by the Philippi Innovation Hub and worked around barriers to make the space work for them. They point out what works and what can be improved. And they make recommendations for improving barriers to access.

Since December 2018, when the photo-stories were made, the Philippi Innovation Hub has made major progress in improving its engagement with the communities in Philippi. The wall mural project is a notable example.

The Philippi group conveyed one recommendation to the Philippi Innovation Hub to further improve access: create an information centre that is visible and where people from the township – even those who may not speak English and may not be able to read and write – can get guidance and direction to the services available.



## START OF THE NEW JOURNEY

Lusanda Soboyise

A beautiful natural black young lady who is lost in the so-called 'cruel world' but she is willing to explore and discover more information and knowledge to assist the livelihoods of Philippi.

# ABOUT THE RESEARCH

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## *Why focus on the Philippi Innovation Hub?*

The informal sector is often seen as an incubator for innovative ideas and locally-derived solutions to social problems. Innovation hubs have sprung up in townships in major cities, with the aim of promoting entrepreneurship, small business development and opportunities for youth development in the informal sector.

While the hub model shows potential to boost collaboration, creativity and innovation, this does not happen automatically. Also, there is a risk that conventional training, incubation and support programmes based on formal knowledge transfer models may be unsuitable. They may exclude the majority of informal businesses, which tend to be survivalist enterprises.

It is thus timely that we assess the strengths and limitations of these hubs, particularly for building local innovation and production capabilities – to inform future investment in innovation hubs as game changers in township economies.

## *Why focus on local capabilities?*

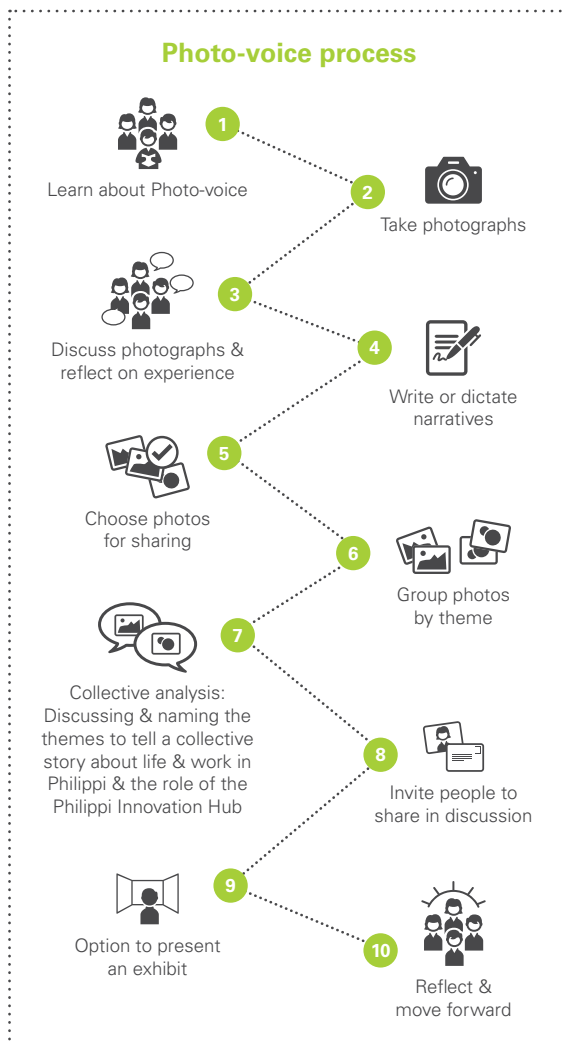
From the start of the research, we decided to go beyond exploring what exists, to try to build a picture of possibilities for engagement with more long-term benefit to the township.

## How were the Photo-voice workshop participants selected?

A group of ten people were selected to be involved in the Photo-voice workshop, which was held over four days in December 2018. The criteria for inclusion in the workshop was that the participants had to:

- be a small business owner, informal trader, or aspiring entrepreneur in Philippi East;
- have access to a smart phone with a camera function; and,
- commit to participating in all four days of the workshop.

The group was dynamic and each had experience in working with knowledge producers at the Hub, as part of its incubation programmes for example. Some had worked with NGOs based at the Hub. Some had attempted to rent business premises at the Hub.



Source: Adapted from Lorenz (2005)  
(<http://www.islorenz.com/currentphotovprojects.htm#photovpath>)





# RESEARCH AND PRODUCTION TEAM

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GLEND **KRUSS**

Project leader  
and oversight



IL-HAAM **PETERSEN**

Project and case study leader,  
co-facilitator, overall design and  
oversight



XOLISA **MAGAWANA**

Fieldwork co-ordinator,  
co-facilitator, liaison



ANTONIO **ERASMUS**

Photography, co-facilitator



STEVENS **MOCHEKI**

Documentation and  
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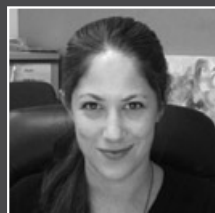
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NOMPUMELELO **FOFA RAKABE**

Inputs and  
curation assistance



TRACEY **WATSON**

Graphic design

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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A special thanks to the group of people who took part in the Photo-voice process. This publication would not have been possible without your participation and unique life stories.

We are grateful to the guidance and support provided by the Sustainable Livelihoods Foundation, who introduced us to Photo-voice.

Thank you to Gerard Ralphs (HSRC), who has played a key role in developing and implementing the project's dissemination strategy.

We are also grateful to all the stakeholders who participated in the initial stages of this project, their contribution was key in paving a direction for the project. We acknowledge all who took part in the one-on-one in-depth interviews and digital storytelling workshop. We thank you for your time and for sharing your stories with us.

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