

YOLO EKASI

An exploration of youth attitudes towards drinking through a visual and participatory engagement process.



RATIONALE

The YOLO_ekasi project engages with youth (aged 18 to 30) from Delft and Philippi in a participatory research process to stimulate debate around youth and leisure. The project aims to contribute new knowledge to the policy debate on alcohol control, responding in particular to the concerns about young people and their use or abuse of alcohol.

Using a Photovoice process and wave of engagements, the project has generated photographs and critical thinking on the leisure activities of young South Africans and in particular the role that liquor consumption fulfils in influencing leisure experience. Our objective is to stimulate a conversation among youth on the risks of drinking, so to encourage other youth to embrace leisure responsibly, minimising the risks of substance abuse to themselves, their families and the broader community. Furthermore the project created a space for youth to express themselves and the diverse influences and ambitions.

The acronym YOLO stands for 'You Only Live Once' and is often associated with living boldly, but in the Yolo_ekasi project the emphasis is placed on making the most of one's opportunities.

YOLO_ekasi is the third project in a trilogy of interventions that have developed community based interventions to reduce alcohol harm related risks. Our first project entailed the development of a safe shebeen concept, an intervention that was piloted by shebeen owners in the community of Sweet Home Farm. Our second project investigated the role of food in alcohol serving venues. The research identified the need to increase access to food in and around venues through encouraging the growth of local street food businesses. Each project has sought to amplify the voice of local communities in seeking out development solutions. In YOLO_ekasi, the voice of the youth is expressed through their own words, photographs and illustrations.



PART A

"TOWNSHIP ISN'T JUST ABOUT VIOLENCE."

**"AS YOUTH WE ALWAYS WANT TO HAVE
A GOOD TIME AND IT'S ALWAYS NICE TO HAVE
SOMEONE ON YOUR SIDE."**

**"YOU DON'T HAVE TO LEAVE EKASI TO
ENJOY YOURSELF."**



**APHELELE PERSHY
GXALAZA**

Lives: Delft / Age: 20

I am a student at Hindle High doing my grade 12. I want to go to university at UWC to study social work. I want to be successful in my life and I want to go further with my studies. What I have achieved in my life is that I am doing my Matric this year. I just want to achieve my goal and for me "education is the key to succeed."



SIBULELE TUTUKA

Lives: Delft / Age: 18

I am a DJ for 7 years now and have been called to play for a lot of events and big parties in the locations. I started in a troop to stay out of trouble and to avoid being involved with the gangsters. Our parents gave us each money so we can buy some of the stuff that we use for the music. I want to open a school for DJs and for those who don't have enough sound system (equipment). I'm still hustling for myself for my future.



SINDI NOWALALA

Lives: Philippi / Age: 28

I work in retail as a fashion assistant buyer. I am inspired by fashion and hoping to be a fashion stylist in the future. I have achieved a lot in my career working in fashion retail the past 2 years and becoming an assistant buyer.



JAMIE-LEE PETERS

Lives: Delft / Age: 18

I live in Mitchells Plain. I have a cardiac rheumatic fever. I have a baby girl of 3 years old. I am just selling party packets and ice cream cones for a living. I really want to become a teacher because I really like to work with kids. I am waiting on the college to accept me and will really like to study hard to achieve my goal.



SISIPHO NYANDA

Lives: Delft / Age: 19

I am young, ambitious and determined. Two years ago, I completed my high school studies which I passed well. Even though my ambition has always been to study Law, financial challenges made me shelve that. I am currently unemployed but working hard to raise money to pursue my goal of attaining a Law degree. Next year I see myself enrolling in one of the universities. Being young, I love hanging out with friends in my area.



MARK TRIEMA

Lives: Delft / Age: 27

I am that guy that doesn't believe in 'I can't do this and I can't do that'. ... [A friend] taught me how to play guitar, I taught him how to play piano, we been doing songs ever since performing at parties and small gigs. But I was never happy with rock music so I got myself a PC in 2013. I started producing myself, making hip hop beats and writing songs. I go by the name REAPER. ... Every day I am in studio, producing, making beats, writing new songs, every day my love for music is insane.



TASNEEM JOHANNES

Lives: Delft / Age: 23

I am a single parent, raising my kids on my own. I'm currently working at J&M Famous Biltong. I am a smart mouth and honest; I'm a strong person; I love meeting new people and I'm friendly and funny at times and full of life. I always put God first before everything else. I love having fun and traveling. If I could travel the world I would, to experience things and the beauty of the world itself - my dreams is to become an astronaut it inspires me a lot since childhood I've always been to the planetarium. I want to go to the moon.



KUDZAISHE MUTETI

Lives: Parrow / Age: 23

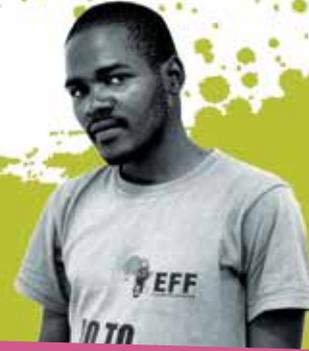
I work for the Royal Portfolio Hotel Group and I'm a butler. I enjoy my job but I have bigger dreams. I would like to become a human rights lawyer one day. My father is my hero and he inspires me. It is his passion for politics and his experiences that made me passionate about fighting for the rights of those who can't fight for themselves and I love working with people. My dream is to travel all over the world fighting for human justice.



**TREYNOLD TATENDA
MSESA (AKA T.NICE)**

Lives: Philippi / Age: 22

I was born in Zimbabwe in September 1994. I finished school in 2013 and dropped out of university in 2015 because of financial problems. I managed to carry on with my music career after dropping out of school. I have accomplished a lot in these past 2 years as a musician. My dream is to become a world recognised musician and a businessman and also to build the biggest children's home in Africa. My plans in the future is just to become successful in my music career and become a breadwinner for many around the world.



MANELISI TUTUKA

Lives: Delft / Age: 23

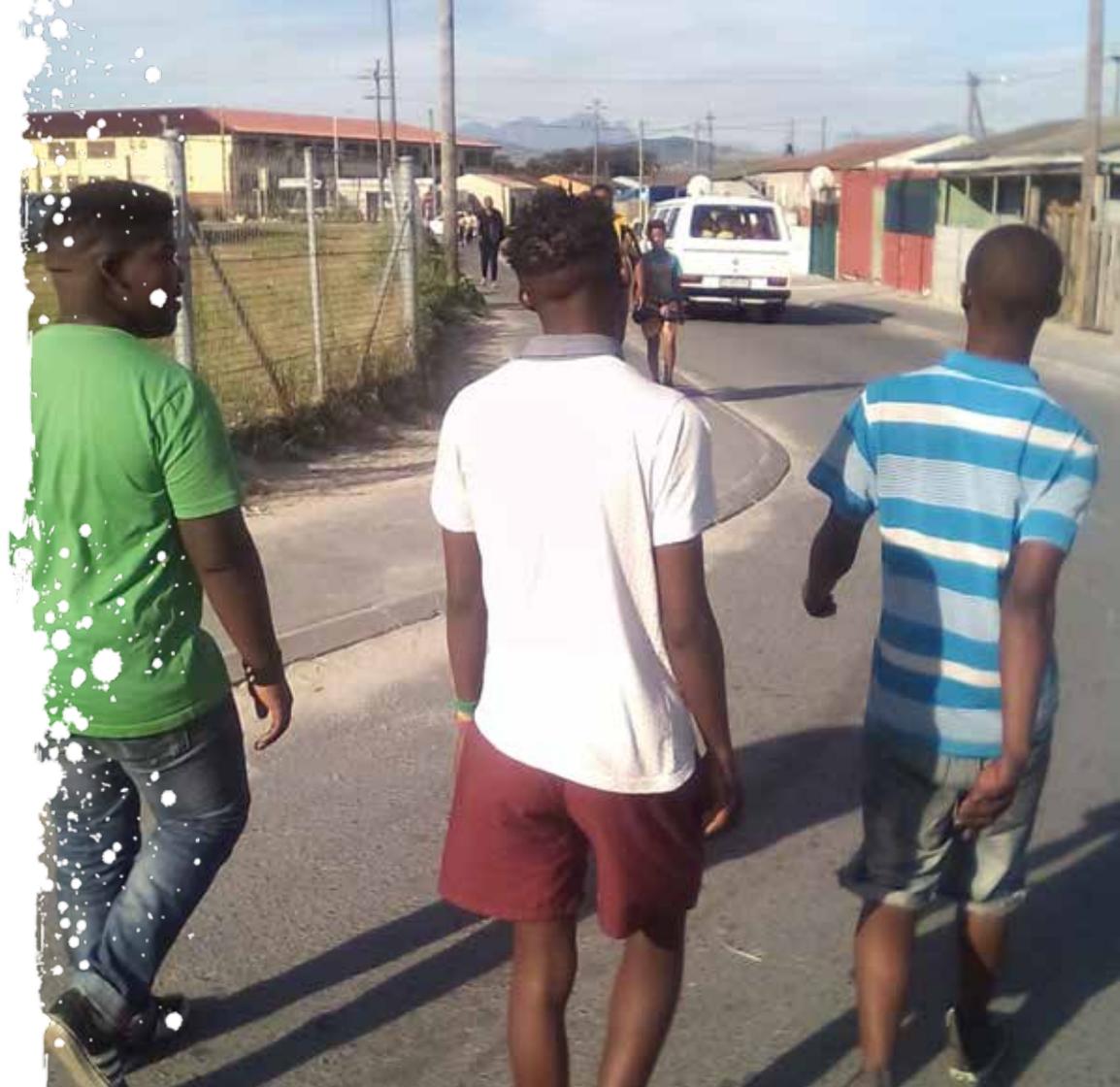
I'm staying in Delft Leiden. I am inspired by the lovely people at SLF and YOLO_ekasi and I love my parents, my brothers and my friends. I was involved in a tavern intervention programme in 2014. Last year I attended a course at Cape Town City Varsity. The name of the courses are Carpentry, Life Skills and Occupational Health and Safety (OHS). In 5 years' time I want to have driver's license, and do a boiler operator course or a tower crane course so that I can work with big machines.

FEARS

Life in eKasi has many challenges. A great number of young people face unemployment. In some cases their parents are out of work or hold low paying jobs. Money is in short supply. Their ambition to study is often held back as a result of inaccessibility to bursaries and grants. Back at home, there are many day to day obstacles, but none greater than the threat of gangsterism. Youth fear crime!

The Scary Street

...My friend and I are walking in the street in Delft; this is one street where one never wants to walk alone because of gangsters. Walking in a big group [of boys] also attracts too much attention from gangsters who may think you are enemies.



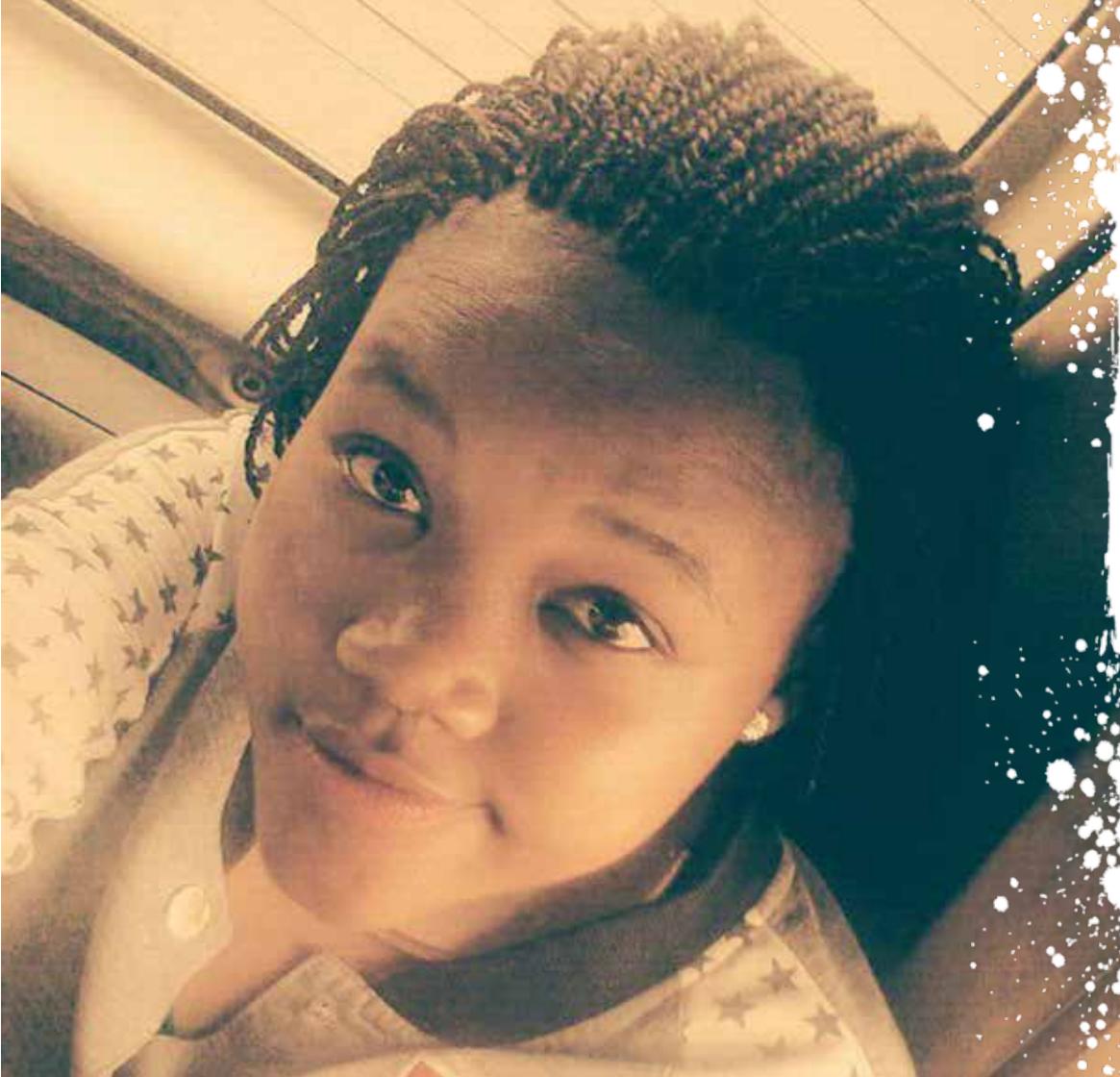
AMBITIONS AND DREAMS

The youth participants have ambition. Some would like to produce and perform music; some seek to advance their learning through studying further, some would like to advance in their careers or pursue new work opportunities in other fields. Befitting their age, the participants' dream of adventure, new experiences and making new friends. But they also want to make a difference in their communities, helping others and bringing about positive change.

**"... OUR BRIGHT FUTURE COMES ONLY
WITH STUDYING FURTHER."**

**"... I AM THAT GUY THAT DON'T BELIEVE IN I
CAN'T DO THIS AND I CAN'T DO THAT."**

**"... SOMETIMES YOU MUST SHOW
YOUR TALENT."**



Myself

This is a selfie I took in the taxi on my way home from church. It was a Sunday afternoon and I took this photo because I am proud of myself, I am not ashamed to be who I am. I am beautiful. Each time I look at this photo I see someone with potential to go far in life.

YOUTH AND LEISURE

Youth engage in an array of leisure activities. Our focus was on youth and drinking. There are other leisure activities, however, that do not necessarily involve alcohol. We have grouped these leisure activities under four broad headings:

- Faith
- Family
- Identity
- Good Times



FAITH

At Church

When at church, that is where we pray for what we need and this we also do at home.



FAMILY

Young Mother

... She is a young mother and a good friend of mine... Spending time with her son creates a very strong bond between the two and I wanted to show that young mothers love their children a lot and spending quality time with them matters.

Family Time

For me, spending time with my family is important. ... I had visited my sister-in law at her place in Nyanga East on a Saturday. In memory of the visit we decided to take a photo showing the importance of family and the smiles clearly show this.



IDENTITY

My Heritage

This photo was taken at a Miss Heritage event. It showcases a beauty pageant dressed in attire that shows the South African flag. ...The beauty pageant in the picture is proud of who she is and where she comes from. The message is that as youth living in a westernised world, we still need to know our heritage.



CHILLING AND GOOD TIMES

Best Buddies

This photo is one of those that we always take whenever we feel like. We love going crazy in our street, my friends and I enjoy each other's company. As youth we always want to have a good time, and it is always nice to have someone on your side.

YOUTH AND DRINKING

The YOLO_ekasi engagement process explored issues around youth and drinking through Photo-voice, small group dialogues and workshops. Using visual methods, the research process sought to document different contexts in which drinking occurs and the social relationships around drinking and non-drinking. In each panel we responded to the topic through photographs, illustrations and quotations, adding our own learning from the engagement process and outputs.

WHY WE LIKE TO DRINK?



The Pot on the Fire

A man making a potjiekos at my friend's birthday party. It was a lovely evening on Saturday. The party was held in Heideveld and we really enjoyed. While the pot was on the fire, we were busy drinking inside the house, waiting for a nice meal. After downing one or two, youths love to have a good potjiekos.



Before the Party

It's not always that people go out to have fun. As guys we pool money together and buy beers just to chill and enjoy. In this photo guys are seen milling around drinking and having a nice time.

“We drink because we want to have fun and enjoy life.”

“Beer gives you the confidence to say what you want to say. 75% of what we say when drunk is the truth.”

“If a boy says hi to a lady in the street she won't say hi but in the bar with a drink she will. Beer makes it easier to talk. You become like a small child again; it reveals the real you.”

“Drinking ... gives me more ideas. Opens my mind. Extra umph to go out.”



OUR LEARNING

- Youth drink to build/maintain relationships with peers.
- Drinking gives youth confidence and alleviates anxiety in social settings. In mixed gendered environments, notably public venues and street parties, drinking is often regarded as an enabling aspect of social interaction and identity expression.
- Going out drinking gives youth an opportunity to experience new places, both in and away from the township, and to meet new people, even celebrities.
- Youth also drink to get drunk. In some situations, drunkenness is desirable (to have a party), whilst in other situations (to chill out) heavy drinking is seen as inappropriate and exclusionary.



WITH WHOM WE DRINK?

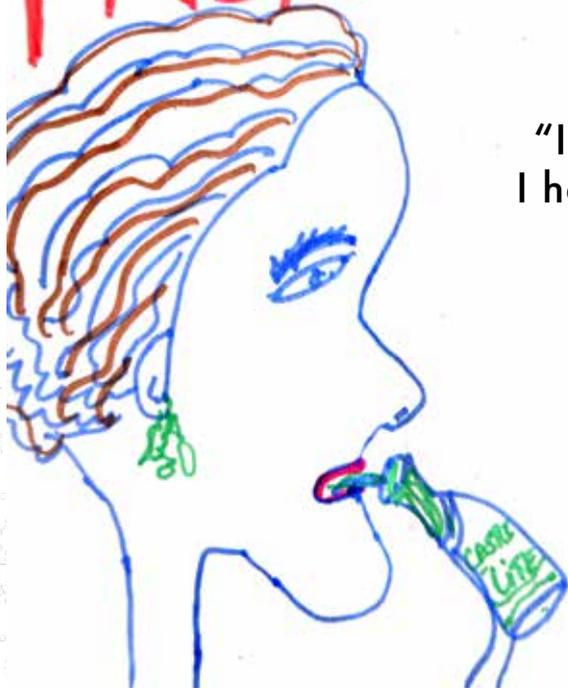
The Right Girls

There are times when having girls around is good... You do not have to go far to enjoy, Kasi is the best place to enjoy. People create vibe in their own streets.

Before the Party

It's not always that people go out to have fun. As guys we pool money together and buy beers just to chill and enjoy. In this photo guys are seen milling around drinking and having a nice time.

FRIENDS



“I like going out with my friends to the club and having a good time.”

“I drink with friends because they love girls. I have to watch over my friends to make sure they are safe. Some girls do not even contribute for the beer.”

“I drink with friends because we want to catch up, talk and listen to each other without being disturbed.”

OUR LEARNING

- Youth prefer drinking amongst close friends, in private settings.
- Drinking in small groups enables youth to share updates on their lives and solidify friendships.
- In public settings, such as shebeens/taverns, youth drink to meet new friends (boys or girls).
- In public with strangers, drinking provides an opportunity to make statements of your identity.

WHERE WE DRINK?



Best Friends

We were together on a Sunday afternoon in Mitchell's Plain. We were sitting in front of Shanice's house, in the driveway just having a few beers. It was a very hot Sunday and therefore nice to have a few cold ones, enjoying ourselves.



Show Us How to Move

In the photo, two revellers go down on the dance floor enjoying themselves on the street. In ekasi people create their own vibe on the streets. The two are showcasing their dance moves, gwaragwara move.

“My friends and I sometimes go out to have some good time. Usually we do this away from home because my parents do not allow me to drink at home. I have to do it under cover.”

“We party at home because it’s safe ... you can see from a person if they are going to cause trouble so if they gate-crash and look like trouble you close the gate and say ‘invites only’. It is much safer at home with friends.”



“I drink in town because I love to experience outdoor life. It’s also not dangerous in town because there is always police around.”

“Delft streets can come alive when you add music to street events.”

“I drink at home because it is safe.”

OUR LEARNING

- Youth prefer drinking at home because it provides a safe and intimate environment.
- Partying at home enables youth to control the 'vibe' and exclude troublemakers.
- Drinking at home is cheaper.
- But some youth do not drink at home so as to disguise their drinking from parents.
- Street and house parties, with loud and dynamic music arranged by DJs, are favoured localities for youth to drink, dance and enjoy the atmosphere.
- Youth avoid certain shebeens to evade their parents and parent's friends.



WHAT WE DRINK?

Party Cocktail

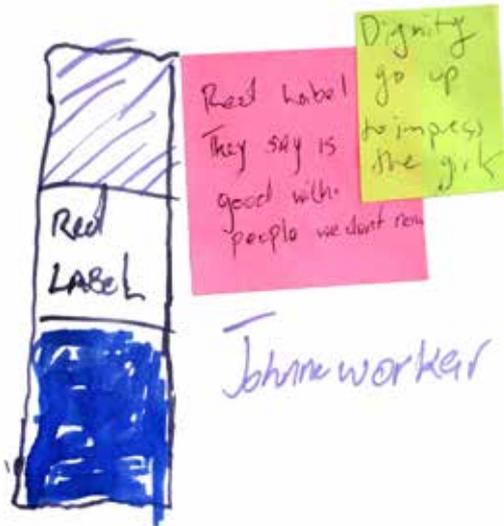
Enjoying food and cocktails with my friends. This all happened on my friend's birthday. We all had a good time at her place in Philippi. One other important part about this photo is that the cocktails are homemade which is cost effective. The cocktails set the tone for the party.

The Hot Liquors I Know

The bottles in the picture show my favourite and finest wines, these are strawberry lips, strawberry cream and VAT 69 blended scotch wine. My friends and I were having a good time, chilling and having a relaxed moment at Beacon Valley. It was a wonderful Saturday afternoon when we decided to come together as a group of friends and chill.

"I love drinking wine because it helps to relax my mind and for my parents not to see that I am drinking. We drinking crackling [cheap wine] at first, it's a secret alcohol, we call this one toothpaste. It is cheap, then later we drink Red Label to raise the standards. They say it's good with people you don't know."

"I drink beer because it makes me feel lekker."



OUR LEARNING

- Young men and young women drink different drinks for different reasons.
- Youth drinkers are brand conscious and some drinking is used to express status.
- Youth chose to drink a range of alcohol types (beer, wine, cider and spirits), commonly drinking in particular sequences.
- When going out to 'party' in 'exclusive' bars or nightlife scene in central Cape Town, some youth chose to first stock up on cheap alcohol, reserving their money so as to purchase status brands when they get to the bar.
- Some youth avoid shebeens because it can affect one's status.



Sometimes you must Show Your Talent

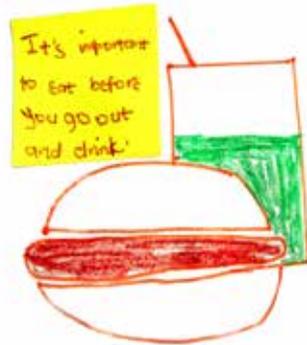
Different rhythms of music is played at different types of times, at times to make people enjoy we play Sitshokot-shoko, fast and continuous. To dismiss people we play slow music. This photo was taken to showcase raw talent that is in townships.



Eating Morning After

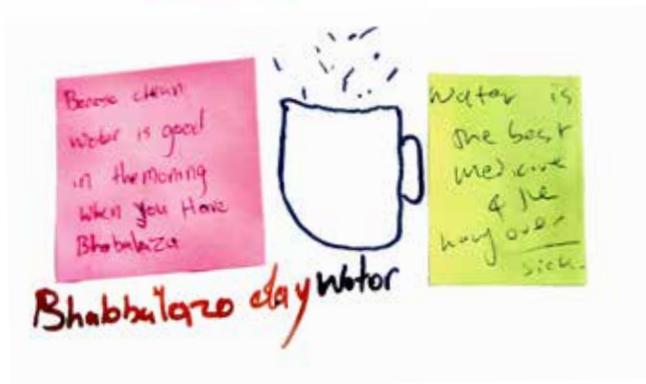
Food is shared generously. Revellers eat from one plate. This photo is taken the morning after the party and everyone feels hungry and only platefuls of meat and cucumbers would help fend off hang-over.

"In the early morning we like to drink beer ... what makes you sick can make you healthy again."



"Water is good in the morning when you have bhabhalasi."

"I don't drink too much because I want to watch over my friends - because they are in danger when they drink... I used to drink and party, but I am trying to change my life."



"I drink only to be tipsy - not to be drunk. I don't drink spirits."

OUR LEARNING

- Youth are generally aware of the dangers and risks associated with drinking and drunkenness.
- The risks that youth expressed concern about were blackouts, sexual assault, unprotected sex, theft especially pick-pocketing, accidents, hang-overs and illness, and the destruction of family.
- Food consumption between drinking, especially when going 'out' to party, is widely practiced.
- Safety is of great concern to women. Various strategies are employed to keep safe. Some of the women spoke of the importance of being selective of the places one drinks and the people with whom one drinks. Girls spoke of the importance of buying their own drinks so as to discourage guys who seek to purchase drinks in exchange for sexual favours.

CONCLUSION

Youth participate in many leisure activities that do not involve drinking, such as worshipping, doing hobbies or attending shows. But these are not seen as an alternative to drinking. It is not an absence of these non-alcohol activities that encourages youth to engage in drinking.

Youth drinking is inextricably linked to 'having a good time'. Drinking is embedded in sociability, with the nature of drinking itself also heavily influenced by where youth drink, the social context in which drinking takes place, the nature of the drinking occasion and the kind of alcohol consumed, to list some of the most consistently mentioned variables. Youth see forms of drunkenness as enjoyment. The consumption of alcohol is either purposeful or cheap; both inferred status and taste influence selection.

Whilst youth enjoy going out to 'party', the most common site of drinking is at home or within the street. Lack of money may influence what and when youth drink, but it is not seen as an obstacle to drinking, but challenges youth to 'acquire' the money or access drink through other drinkers and or social networks.

Youth recognise that sections of society (their parents, church congregants etc.) see drinking as transgressive. So drinking is constituted as a hidden practice.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Before prescribing alcohol control policies that target youth, policy makers should take note of the views of the youth and understand their reasons for drinking.
- Avoid health awareness messages that stereotype youth drinking as symptomatic of personal failure; these messages will only reinforce self-doubt and stir motivation for confidence drinking.
- Youth drinking is unlikely to stop. Alcohol control strategies should therefore focus on influencing the social conventions in which alcohol is consumed.
- The right to drink should be framed as part of the set of social responsibilities afforded to adults at the legal age, which in turn requires a maturity of behaviour.

PART B

"I HOPE TO SHOOT JUST ONE PHOTO THAT CAN HAVE A POSITIVE EFFECT AND CHANGE SOMEONE'S LIFE"

"THERE IS A LOT TO SAY ABOUT OUR WORKSHOPS AND THE ACTIVITIES BECAUSE...I FELT SAFE AND AT HOME AND I ENJOYED EVERY MOMENT WITH YOU GUYS. I'VE MET INCREDIBLE PEOPLE ...YOLO_EKASI ROCKS!"

"MEETING DIFFERENT PEOPLE THAT HAVE THE SAME VISION ABOUT YOUTH LIFE AND FUTURE...MOST OF THE ACTIVITIES (IN THE WORKSHOP) MADE US FREE AND ABLE TO TALK IN FRONT OF PEOPLE."

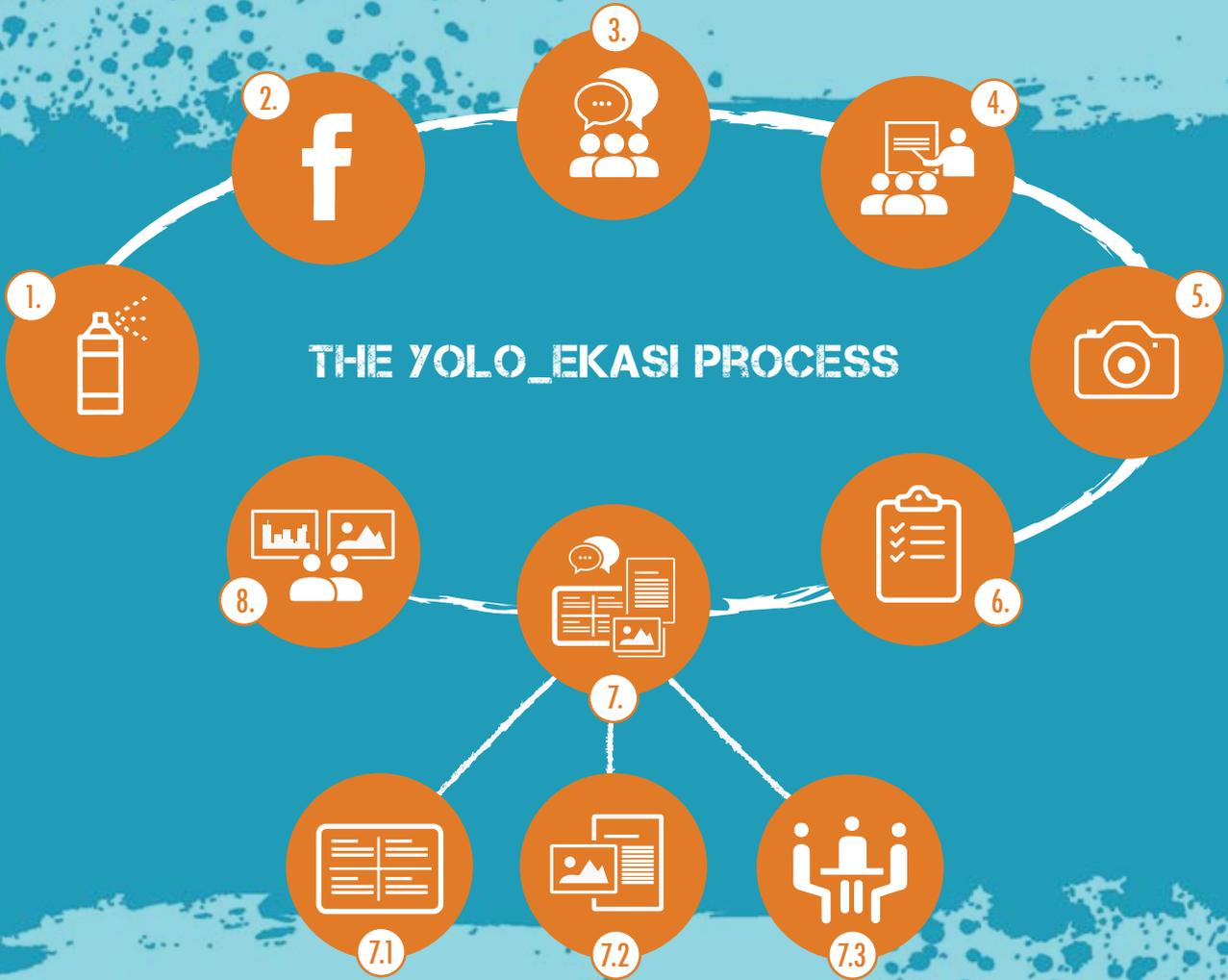
"I'VE LEARNT A LOT (THROUGH THE WORKSHOP) ABOUT HOW YOUTH OF TODAY LIVE..TALKING IN FRONT OF OTHERS AND HAVING RESPECT FOR OTHERS...I AM GRATEFUL TO HAVE MET YOU."

METHODS AND PROCESS

The YOLO_ekasi project utilised a visual participatory engagement and action research methodology. The approach sought to ensure that the youth would derive benefit through a learning process in which they would be empowered to contribute knowledge (their voice) whilst acquiring new skills and understanding of their situation and that of their peers. The method comprised Photovoice, social media, small group meetings, workshop interaction and diagramming to meet these objectives.

Photovoice is a research method that uses photography as a tool for self-reflection and engagement, where participants are asked to capture photos of their experiences in their daily lives.

The coordination of these processes helped to stimulate dialogue among the youth on a number of important social issues, especially around 'acceptable and unacceptable' behaviour. The youth participants were thus enabled to think about their own behaviours and social norms, and especially how these were related to the theme of alcohol consumption.



THE YOLO_EKASI PROCESS



Graffiti Launch

The project was inaugurated by a graffiti event in Philippi on youth day in June 2016, close to the Philippi Business Place where an abandoned wall was marked with the project logo.



Facebook Mobilising

Because Facebook is popular amongst young people today, a Facebook group was chosen as the primary mobilisation and communications platform for YOLO_ekasi. The YOLO_ekasi Facebook group was advertised through SLF's Facebook page, drawing an initial group of 60 members (which subsequently grew). A series of strategic incentives were introduced to encourage youth to post, comment and engage on Facebook, including prizes (such as data bundles and shopping vouchers) for posting pictures and being active on the group.

Throughout the YOLO_ekasi project, Facebook was maintained as a communications and mobilisation platform. In order to retain the youth's participation on Facebook, each active individual was given data or airtime bundles to enable them to continue uploading their photos.



The On-the-Ground Mobilisation

The YOLO_ekasi Facebook group was also promoted through pamphlets that were distributed in Delft and Philippi. The project team spent time at libraries in these areas inviting interested youth to enrol on the Facebook group and to participate in the project. These same sites were re-visited periodically throughout the project to mobilise and support the core youth group.



YOLO_ekasi Graffiti launch in Philippi.



Treynold T Nice > YOLO_ekasi

Follow · September 19 · €

Like Share

10 others



Manelisi Tutuka Uhamba ngw moto estrong ntwana

Like · September 20 at 1:34pm



Sibulele Tutuka Damme one day iwill drive that car

Like · 1 · September 20 at 3:39pm



Treynold T Nice Thts the spirit obvious u will

Like · 1 · September 21 at 1:37pm

Facebook enabling a conversation thread between the youth on the YOLO_ekasi Facebook group, showing engagement with each other's posts.



Inception Workshop

Following the initial mobilisation, 20 of the most active Facebook group members attended an inception workshop at SLF, where the group were introduced to SLF as an organisation and to the YOLO_ekasi project. This group decreased to ten committed core participants through the process.

Every effort was taken to ensure a relatively balanced representation of gender, race, age and taking into account where people lived.



Photovoice Training Workshops

To prepare the core group of youth for their participation in the project, a two-day Photovoice training workshop was provided. The Photovoice training emphasised the effectiveness of photography as a powerful medium of communication for social impact. It also guided the youth practically in basic methods for capturing good photographs and on formulating captions and descriptions for precise messaging



Field Component

Within the Photovoice process, the participants were given weekly themes to photograph over a period of three weeks and share on Facebook. The first two themes covered an exploration of spare money spent on first fun and leisure, and second on food and drink. The third theme asked each person to use photographs to document their ambitions: my life, my future. These themes were discussed with the youth at weekly meetings as well as on the YOLO_ekasi Facebook group.



On-the-ground mobilisation: library meet ups with youth at the Delft library.



Photovoice training workshop: an afternoon in the park practicing taking photos.



Participants experimenting with framing an image during the photovoice training.

7



Framing Workshop

After the Photovoice process the participants took part in a three-day workshop to select, analyse and frame the photographs (which now form the exhibition). As a collective, the workshop produced rich material both in terms of Photovoice messages, as well as in creating constructive spaces for critical reflection on young people's views on leisure.

7.1



Consumption Diagrams

The youth produced creative posters mapping their own consumption behaviour. Drawings were made to represent 'What we drink?', 'With whom we drink?', 'When we drink?', and 'Where we drink?' Each participant then explained the meaning to their drawings. This tool produced rich insights on youth consumption behaviour in townships

7.2



Benefits, Risks and Consequences Discussions

The framing workshop engaged youth in focus group discussions on the benefits, risks and consequences of alcohol consumption, which built on the discussions around the consumption diagrams and laid the foundation for further discussions around the selected photographs.

7.3



Thematic Analysis

The final part of the framing workshop was a thematic analysis of the photographs. Participants selected their top six images and took time to detail the narratives or messages they wanted to share. From these the group were able to identify common themes and messages.



Drawings and notes exploring individual drinking choices and experiences.



Gendered focus group discussion on drinking risks.



Discussing themes to group photographs during the framing workshop.



Acknowledgement

The Sustainable Livelihoods Foundation would like to thank the youth participants for their hard work and commitment to this project. Your devotion and willingness to see the process through was inspiring and we thank each and every one for your spirit and energy.

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