

**Jansenville Development Forum:  
Linking Community and Government in the Rural Landscape  
of the Eastern Cape Province**

**Susan Wilkinson-Maposa**

**Community Grantmaking and Social Investment Programme  
Centre for Leadership and Public Values  
Graduate School of Business  
University of Cape Town**

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For any other inquiries, please contact Alison Mathie or Gord Cunningham at the Coady International Institute.

Coady International Institute  
St. Francis Xavier University  
PO Box 5000  
Antigonish, NS, B2G 2W5, Canada  
Canada

1.902.867.3960  
[coady@stfx.ca](mailto:coady@stfx.ca)  
[www.coady.stfx.ca](http://www.coady.stfx.ca)



## **Abstract**

As a philanthropic funding agency, Ikhala Trust's work with the Jansenville Development Forum has recognized the full extent of the "horizontal philanthropy" operating at the community level in Jansenville and has worked to support and strengthen this. The careful balancing act of helping communities strengthen themselves without creating dependency is discussed in the larger South African context of striking the balance between rights or entitlements that South Africans have fought for, and opportunities for people to build sustained independent livelihoods, reinforced by traditions of mutual self help.

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## *Introduction*

We are different from other donors. We are more interested in sharing in your journey than telling you what to do. We try to put a value on what people do for their own development. (Bernie Dolley, Director, Ikhala Trust)

This case study illustrates how local associations bound by principles of mutual self-help came together under a community-based mechanism – the Jansenville Development Forum (JDF) - to strengthen their capacity and access external resources. Their shared goal and vision was to advance out of adversity and seek greater opportunities. This story is set in the township area of Jansenville, a small town of 6000, located in the sheep and goat farming area of the Eastern Cape province, in the Ikwezi Local Municipality, the “mohair capital” of South Africa.

It offers a rich example of how community assets and agency created a demand for organization and self-strengthening that resulted in the emergence of a community-based intermediary non-governmental organization (NGO). The JDF not only incubated civil society, but acted as a focal point for local government consultation with community in municipal-level planning processes.

The JDF story began in 2000, when a group of ten community-based organizations (CBOs) came together, including a burial society, a women’s income-generation group, and an advice office (providing information on rights and responsibilities related to various issues including labour laws, social grants, and access to basic social services). Some CBOs had been in existence for 10-13 years, while others had been in existence for less than two years, but all had the mutual desire to “move.” Increased access to external forces – networks, training, and funds – was sought in order for the groups to grow. Sharing what they had, such as volunteer time, basic office infrastructure, knowledge, and experience, the CBOs set out to improve the contribution they could make to local community development. To make this happen, they drew on, tapped into, and leveraged local norms and practices of self-help – pulling together, caring, and sharing.

Several institutional actors are involved in this story. The protagonist is the JDF as an umbrella body of CBOs. The supporting cast consists of Ikhala Trust, a community grant maker based in Port Elizabeth, and local government, the Ikwezi Municipal Council. Each actor plays a distinct role.

First, JDF, a mobilizer and organizer, emerged from within the community and incubated the capacity of the associational life and energy that already existed. It did not introduce new associations. Strong and capable leadership nurtured a common interest: the desire to “move.” JDF tapped into the support systems built into the norms and culture of township life. It also linked civil society efforts, rights, and needs to the government’s mandate to engage more closely with community for fuller participation and responsiveness. Second, Ikhala Trust, an external grant maker, is a facilitator. Through support to JDF, it created a space for the organization and its members to “discover” themselves. Ikhala did not lead from a donor perspective, but rather “lifted up” existing capacity through advisory support to close gaps. It prepared and qualified JDF to increase its access to new resources and

opportunities. The technical, advisory, and financial support provided by Ikhala came with its own reputational capital that JDF leveraged to link with external support and resources.

Third, local government, the Ikwezi Municipality, is a strategic collaborator. The government and civil society dichotomy was not overlapped. JDF is a “watch dog,” but it also contributes to the council’s ability to carry out its mandate to promote community participation in local government planning processes and the provision of basic social services as a right of citizenship. For its part, the council is serious about people’s participation and good governance. It has begun to adapt how politicians interact with the community and has established various forums to strengthen communication, including monthly meetings with civil society.

The roots of JDF began in shallow, yet fertile, soil. In 2002, adversity – unsustainable funding, a lack of coordination and limited resources – brought fragmented groups together. Yet it was the practice of self help, such as a willingness to share and work with the small things they had, including a phone, fax machine and office space, that kept them together and allowed collective advance toward a more viable existence.

JDF operated “out of nothing,” having to “beg” for small things, including ink for the printer or a ream of paper. In August 2002, a grant of R 20,000 (or 1,934 USD, since 1 USD is equivalent to approximately 7 South African Rand), followed by a second grant of R 13,000 (1,257 USD), were awarded by Ikhala Trust. These were used to purchase a telephone and fax, as well as stationery, allowing JDF to produce funding documents and communicate with the outside world. Members were excited but disciplined: they showed up for work at 8 a.m. to discuss programs, talk about the previous day’s activities, and share problems. They relied on volunteer labour; as well, they brought their own furniture and cleaning materials from home. Then, in 2003, Ikhala Trust brought a computer: this was a turning point. In addition, JDF received its first funds from government in June of the same year. The National Development Agency (NDA) provided a grant of R 887,000 (117,173 USD). Intended for one year, it was spread out to three. This allowed JDF to move forward and grow.

In the seven years since its inception, JDF has developed considerably. While there was one staff member at the start, there are now eight. From its beginnings in a one-room building, the organization is now housed in an 11-room building. Funding has increased from a first round of start-up funds in 2002 to a solid funding relationship with government. Volunteers are now wage-earners. And, building on its origins as a group of disparate CBOs, JDF is now a leading organization, recognized locally, regionally, and provincially. During this time, the Jansenville community has, in fact, “moved.” The magnitude of this achievement should not be underestimated. In the words of Judy Chalmers, Member of Parliament:

To know how far they have come, you have to know where they came from. This is an example of a community that works together with good leadership. Twenty years ago, it was a war zone – a terrifying place, especially for young people trying to resist under apartheid. A few weeks ago, there was a fair where you saw “two days of happiness” – a genuine mixing of races eating together, dancing, etc. I have worked here since the 1980s and it is a wonder to see how this town has progressed.

Jansenville has very [few] natural resources, including water, so it is exciting for me to hear the stories. This place is a fantastic symbol of the new South Africa. (personal communication, 2007)

This account told by an activist and passionate advocate of social justice and transformation is poignant. It portrays a lived reality that broadly frames the South African experience and sets a backdrop to appreciate the Jansenville story.

This case study tells the Jansenville story from the JDF perspective and in the context of a newly democratic country. It unpacks Jansenville's experience and achievements by placing them in the framework of self-help and mutual assistance – local assets and agency – as well as the institutional framework of an intermediary organization able to satisfy demands from “below” (community associations) as well as from “above” (government). Attention is drawn to interesting insights for development practice, including the conundrum for community-driven development that lies in the tension between entitlement and empowerment, or rights and responsibilities.

#### *Insights for Community-driven Development*

The JDF experience highlights two critical dimensions of community development that are flagged here and developed more fully in subsequent sections. One is the recognition and strengthening of help traditions and norms as a community asset and agency. The second is the inherent tension between citizen rights and citizen responsibilities in achieving sustainable community development.

#### *Local Systems of Self-help*

The Jansenville case demonstrates the potential or promise of community assets and agency as a developmental tool. That is, the practice and norms of people helping one another were the “seed” that JDF nurtured to bring the community together. This seed was germinated, through CBO incubation, to facilitate community-driven development and promote movement away from adversity.

What is so special about this? The conventional lens tends to guide the eye along a vertical line of resources flowing up and down, from people and communities of high net wealth to those of low net wealth. The Jansenville example shows what is visible through a less frequently used lens. JDF's gaze is set on side-to-side or horizontal flow of tangible and intangible resources, among and between people and associations within a community. Organizations came together of their members' own volition, sustained by drawing on, and pooling together, the contributions of each group. These contributions ranged from skills, knowledge, and experiences, to fax machines and telephones, to plastic chairs and loaves of bread. JDF operated like this – reliant on its own commitment, vision, and resources – for three years prior to any significant financial assistance.

### *Rights and Responsibilities*

This case also brings to the surface the tension between citizen rights and claims on the state for social services (constitutionally enshrined in South Africa), and the responsibility of citizens to do things for themselves and generate their own opportunities. JDF has successfully brought the community to the point of movement with access to social services and social development funds. However, there is now a dire need for enhanced employment and livelihood opportunities. A critical question emerges: Will the community, largely dependent on social grants, see this development as a job for the government or will it embark upon the process of creating its own opportunities?

For JDF, a relevant issue is how to facilitate access to “rights” in a way that does not create dependency and expectation, but rather retains a community’s sense of its own autonomy and ability to generate opportunities and a longer term vision for the future. This issue has become a reality in 2007. JDF is currently moving into a new phase, building on its success in incubating civil society, while simultaneously incubating entrepreneurship, to help the community make a transition into enterprise and employment creation for more robust and sustainable livelihoods. This will not be easy and there is no silver bullet. However, potential links exist, including fostering the connection between social entrepreneurship and economic development. This issue of livelihood promotion is revisited in the conclusion with some preliminary thoughts on the potential for JDF’s commitment to asset-based social development to evolve into asset-based economic development.

The need for this shift is exemplified in the discussion below as the national and local reality of high unemployment, low levels of entrepreneurial activity and high levels of dependency are detailed.

### *The Context*

The particular relationships of help that brought CBOs together in the small town of Jansenville can only be fully appreciated when the contradictory realities of the new South Africa are taken into account. This section explores these contradictions, setting the scene at national and local levels.

### *National Realities*

The trauma of the apartheid years, and the euphoric idealism that followed, fuelled the creation of a stridently progressive Constitution in 1994, one that was committed to “a better life for all” through reconciliation, redistribution and transformation. A newly enfranchised black electorate could now expect to enjoy the material, social, and political benefits of citizenship, enshrined in a Bill of Rights which included access to an array of social grants designed to lift the poorest groups from destitution. Meanwhile, a growing economy would offer broad-based opportunity for employment.

Yet the legacy of apartheid has been slow to change. Although a middle-income country in Gross National Product (GNP) terms, South Africa continues to have one of the highest levels of income inequality in the world (with a Gini coefficient of 0.58), with hardship

deepening among black South Africans in many areas. Inequalities in land ownership and housing stock continue to follow the contours of racial layering (Kuljian, 2005). A growing economy has not significantly budged current unemployment levels of 26.7% (Statistics South Africa, 2006) because the labour force is relatively unskilled. Inexperience of entrepreneurship in the apartheid years has meant that black South Africans still have relatively low levels of entry into entrepreneurial activity. A recent Global Entrepreneurship Monitor (GEM) report placed South Africa with a Total Early-Stage Entrepreneurial Activity (TEA) index of 5.29%, which is considerably lower than the global average of 9.43%. The TEA index measures the percentage of individuals between the ages of 18 and 64 who are involved in starting a new business (Maas & Herrington, 2006). Also, participation in the workforce has eluded many because they have been compromised by the devastating blow struck by HIV/AIDS, infecting one in six adults (AVERT, 2007) which the South African government has only recently officially recognized and begun to deal with. A social grants system unique in the developing world – almost 50%, or 49.7%, of South African government expenditures were related to community and social services (Statistics South Africa, 2006) – acts as an effective safety net, but the dignity assured by effective education and meaningful employment has still to take hold.

As an emblem of the achievement of political freedom, South Africa has made a constitutional commitment to democratize development by establishing mechanisms for broad-based citizen participation in local government. The boldness of this undertaking should not be underestimated, given that during the apartheid regime there were separate public services for each racial group. Under the new constitution, these separate and exclusionary services were dismantled and their roles amalgamated into one inclusive public service for all, which was no small task. Now, local government not only has a responsibility to deliver services (water, electricity, roads, etc.), but also has a mandate to help build democracy and promote socio-economic development. It is expected to share decision-making with the private sector and community groups, a role without precedent in the centralized, top-down delivery system under apartheid (Chikulu, 2000).

However, given the impact of the economic aspects of apartheid, people in South Africa have tended to judge local government more on its performance in essential service delivery than on its efforts to provide a democratic space for citizen engagement (Mattes et al., 2003). Inevitably, until there is a connection between the merits of consultation and visible results of wealth redistribution, the value of participation will not be fully appreciated. It therefore falls to organizations like the JDF to make the benefits of democratic space real for people, as demonstrated in its partnership with local government in poverty assessments, and its participation along with other stakeholders in the formulation of an Integrated Development Plan (IDP) required of all municipalities. (In Ikwezi Municipality's "Vision 2011," a Masithethisane – "Come, let's talk together" – program is planned, whereby every three months, councillors and municipal officials visit each community in order to report on government programs, answer questions, and listen to input from community members.)

### *Local Realities*

Jansenville is located in the municipality of Ikwezi in the Eastern Cape Province. The Eastern Cape is one of the poorest provinces in South Africa with the highest levels of

unemployment in the country at 29.6% (Statistics South Africa, 2004), which has implications for the revenue base from which to draw on for the backlog of service delivery commitments, as well as the potential for employment. The population density is small in these rural areas. The terrain around Jansenville is comprised of vast tracts of dry savanna bushveld; its tenuous vegetation supporting extensive sheep and goat farming. According to a recently commissioned report for the mohair industry, 61% of the mohair production is based in South Africa, with the Jansenville area a major contributor to overall production. Large sheep and goat farms, owned by white Afrikaans farmers for generations, have been major employers of black and coloured labourers. In the nervousness associated with political transition, and uncertainty about the future of the industry, sheep and goat herds are reported to have declined (personal communication with a commercial farmer and Notizi Vanda, April 2007), and some farms have been converted to game farms for high-end tourism. However, a recent resurgence of confidence is now reflected in the Ikwezi municipality staking much of its future on the promise of increased production of mohair, greater opportunities for value-added production (e.g. tanning and mohair processing), and greater participation of black farmers in the industry through its “emerging farmer” program.

Ikwezi municipality as a whole has a population of 10,000, with Jansenville’s population at approximately 6,000. The municipality is relatively racially integrated with approximately 10% of the population white, 55% coloured, and 35% black (Census, 2001). As the statistics from the last census show, the rate of unemployment is devastatingly high at 46.35%, with a corresponding high level of dependency on social grants (between 65% and 70%). In Jansenville, approximately 46% are registered as unemployed; 32% have withdrawn from the workforce or are not looking for work; 21% are employed full time; and 1% are employed as seasonal workers (estimates based on the 2007 Ikwezi Local Municipality Draft IDP). Lack of employment means that a great portion of the Jansenville population relies on government social grants as the main source of revenue. Social grants are provided by the government to residents who are unable to sustain themselves. Grants range in size from R200 (28 USD) per month for a Child Support grant to R 870 (123 USD) per month awarded to those eligible for the Old Age Pension, the Care Dependency grant, the Disability grant or the War Veterans grant. To position these in terms of their contribution to people’s livelihood, the minimum wage guide for farm workers, a typical employment opportunity in Jansenville, ranges from R 885 to R 989 per month, depending on the season (South African Department of Labour, April 2007).

While social grants have the potential to build the local economy by injecting financial resources, much of the grant money is spent in neighboring towns or externally run businesses, and therefore does not stay within the community. With the exception of a few *spaza* shops (general stores) there is very little evidence of local trading. On social grant day, a flea market operates, but the majority of the vendors reside outside of Jansenville, moving from town to town. As they move on, local monies circulate out of the immediate economy and are not retained.

The government is addressing this issue through business grant schemes that promote small business, but in a country where the Global Entrepreneurship Monitor (GEM) ranking is deteriorating, it may be an uphill battle (Mass & Herrington, 2006). The GEM study looks at rates of entrepreneurship in a country, including the impact on national economic growth

and factors that encourage entrepreneurship; its 2006 report tried to isolate some factors that explain why South Africa's position in the GEM rankings has deteriorated over time despite improved macro-economic conditions in the country. One of the most important findings is that potential entrepreneurs lack the mindset and skills to become true entrepreneurs. Although a positive entrepreneurial culture is starting to form on a macro level, entrepreneurship on a micro level is not showing any signs of growth. International markets are not penetrated, employment creation is not encouraged, and innovation is under pressure. The low levels of educational qualifications may be an important factor in explaining why this discrepancy persists. The challenges of starting a new business are many, given the short supply of skills and business acumen, including an entrepreneurial mindset, which is not surprising, given a legacy of apartheid.

For the municipal government, the alleviation of poverty has been its first priority. Personal communication with the mayor of Jansenville highlights that local government has been preoccupied with delivering the services expected since the Bill of Rights was introduced, and with trying to bridge the gap between income from its own limited revenue base of roughly R 11 million (1.5 million USD), and additional funds of R 21 million (3 million USD) required from national, provincial or private sources to fulfil its commitments. Since 2000, significant progress has been made in terms of infrastructure development, such as improvements to local housing, water collection tanks, toilet installation, and electricity in the township area, but huge backlogs remain.

Employment has been generated by expansion of public services and by this intense period of infrastructure development. However, in the longer term, these short-term employment opportunities will have to be replaced by a sustainable means of livelihood for those making the shift from: a) employment in public works, and b) unemployment or destitution, assuming that they are enabled by social grants to seek work or take risks in self employment.

### *The Challenge Ahead*

In many respects, therefore, Jansenville, and the Ikwezi municipality of which it is part, is at a transition in terms of its future. Will social grants be the way people in this community maintain their current livelihood base, or will there be sufficient redistribution of assets and restructuring of the economy to ensure that the income poor can grasp new opportunities and move beyond the limitation of their current livelihood situation? JDF played a role in bringing the Jansenville community to where it is today. It can be anticipated that the organization's contribution will continue into the future.

### *JDF's Story*

To remain true to JDF's emergence, an account of its development can rightfully begin with an appreciation of the organizations that formed it. This includes local associations that emerged independently through norms and practices of self-help and were later further assisted by JDF. Two stories – The Ikwezi Edu-care Story (Box 1) and The Khayalesizwe Burial Society (Box 2) – are told here. They are prime examples of local associations that emerged organically within the community and drew on local resource mobilization,

priorities, and commitment. In the case of Edu-care, membership in JDF skillfully leveraged government funds to pay for children's attendance fees. This support validated a community service and strengthened what the community was doing for itself.

*Box 1: The Ikenzi Edu-care Story: Jolene Kolobile, Director*

In 1987, I noticed that there were many children roaming the streets of Jansenville, so a friend and I decided to gather them and run a daycare service for them. We called a meeting to discuss this with the community and explained what we were going to do. Soon, a committee was formed. At first, we started at the church hall, and then moved to another church hall, and then another hall. To keep things running, we would ask banks, businesses, parents, etc. for support. Parents were very supportive and would give us anything we needed (pots, food, and clothes). They still do that today. Finally, in 1993, the municipality gave us the building we are in today and in 1994 we started receiving a salary.

Now the parents are starting a community garden to grow food that will be used to feed the children. The agricultural department gave us the seeds and fertilizer for this. Since we have a water tank from the municipality and one from JDF, the garden is possible. We have become a member of JDF and work closely with them for fax, phone, and typing services. Through them, we are able to access funding from NDA. There is also talk of opening a second-hand clothing store in our compound that will provide a salary for one of our volunteers.

We now have 85 kids. It costs R 30 (just over 3 USD) per month per child, but the department of social services covers this for 60 of the children. I often visit the other schools and check on the children who have gone through us. Those children who did not start here are struggling.

Similar to the Edu-care experience, the Khayalesizwe Burial Society tells how access to a one-time grant through JDF strengthened the communities own priorities. An external grant purchased a body fridge. This asset allowed the society to offer a "community mortuary." This service contributes to the sustainability of the society by creating further revenue streams. Again, self-help was not displaced, but strengthened.

*Box 2: The Khayalesizwe Burial Society Story*

Perched on top of a hill with the graveyard in distant view, is a simple white, cement block building with a tin roof. Neatly kept, it sits on the edge of a township and is secured with a simple wire fence. Inside are two rooms. One contains coffins, and one in particular, with varnished wood and polished handles, sits on the floor next to a simpler dark wooden box. In the other room is an imposing body fridge that can hold six corpses. Inside an old lady "lies sleeping."

This Burial Society was established 16 years ago. The idea was introduced by a society in a neighbouring town. Its leader guided them in how to set up and run operations; once 50 members were secured help was no longer needed.

Today the society has 500 members, and it provides a vitally-needed service to the whole community (black and coloured alike), especially in a context of a high HIV/AIDS death rate, and in the absence of a local mortuary facility at the state hospital. The society owns, and conducts operations from, a building purchased from the municipal council. Members pay a monthly fee of R 20 (3 USD). The funds are collected by volunteers and recorded in a booklet.

In 2004, through its membership in JDF, the society received a one-time external grant. With this, a three-tier body fridge was purchased. Membership fees are used to run and maintain this equipment – electricity, for example, costs approximately R 300-400 a month (40-60 USD) – as well as provide services to members. Provision of a mortuary facility increased membership and allowed the society to sell services including space in the fridge, as well as transport from the home or hospital to the mortuary and then to the cemetery. Furthermore, the relevance and reputation of the society also increased through a relationship of respect and cooperation with the local hospital.

In terms of benefits, a member is entitled to a simple coffin – with an estimated cost of R 1 000 (141 USD) – upon his or her death. Members are also entitled to a dug grave; help to lower the coffin into the grave with ropes if the member can't afford the machine; seven days in the fridge and a further three days if needed at a charge of R 25 per day (4 USD); food and refreshments for the funeral for R 140 (20 USD); a bus from church to cemetery for R 280 (40 USD); and a contribution toward a hearse to pick up the body for R 60 (9 USD).

The experience detailed in Box 2 offers a strong example of how a strategic and well-thought-out grant can reinforce a community's own asset base and ability to act without creating dependency or detracting from local priorities and needs.

To continue with the JDF story, attention now turns to its organizational development and interplay with other institutions. From an organizational development perspective, JDF started out as an incubator for CBOs and emerged into an intermediary organization that satisfies civil society as well as local government. JDF went through four stages of growth: start-up, take off, growth, and transition, as described below.

#### *Start-up*

In 2000, a disparate group of CBOs pooled and shared their limited resources to “keep going.” They did their best with what they had collectively and drew on local norms and traditions of pulling together and sharing. This strength was leveraged to network with others – including the Eastern Cape NGO coalition – as well as to develop a relationship with Ikhala Trust. Ikhala's advisory support was instrumental in helping CBOs frame their vision and objectives. Furthermore, JDF drew on Ikhala's own networks and reputational

capital to access funding through the Strengthening Capacities for Transforming Relationships and Exercising Rights (SCAPE) program. (SCAPE is a civil society capacity building program coordinated by CARE South Africa-Lesotho.) This allowed the municipality and CBOs to be trained, and made it possible for JDF to conduct its own field survey and come up with a Jansenville livelihood assessment. The results of this study informed the mission and objective of JDF: to share limited resources; carry out fund raising; guard against duplication; and organize civil society. JDF lobbied for space and was awarded a house by the local municipality as its office premises.

### *Take off*

In November 2002, funding came from Ikhala Trust. A small, but significant, grant allowed JDF to organize access to a telephone, fax machine, and computer. This was “gold.” It enabled communication with external agencies and allowed JDF to focus on writing proposals and developing programs.

### *Growth*

In 2003-2004, JDF received a substantive operating fund from the NDA, which enabled JDF to implement its program plan for that year. (NDA reports to Parliament through the Minister for Social Development. It is mandated to grant funds to Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) to meet the developmental needs of poor communities; strengthen CSOs for long-term sustainability; locate funds for the NDA; and support consultation, policy debate, research, and publications.)

The NDA funds allowed all CBO members to run their own projects and receive training. Furthermore, JDF began to operate like an established organization and volunteer staff could now be paid. In this period, the district and provincial governments also provided funds to renovate the office premises. From 2003 and onward, things “really moved” and the JDF centre was busy. Over time, the CBO incubation process bore fruit as members registered independently with the Department of Social Development and accessed funding directly. Grounded in their emergent strength, CBOs no longer required “hand holding.” This has allowed JDF’s role to evolve.

### *Transition*

Over the 2006-2007 period, JDF’s role has changed. It has met its initial objective and has taken all of the initial CBOs to a point of independence. At this juncture, the emergence of new CBOs has come to a halt and an “incubator” is no longer needed. JDF has completed its task and has built up local civil society. As such, JDF finds itself at a turning point. What its role will be in the future remains uncertain.

What is certain, however, is that members have grown to a level where they no longer need JDF for financial and technical support. The networking connections, bonding social capital created among the organizations, and ability to leverage the name of a well respected organization such as JDF continues to benefit those involved.

The JDF focus is no longer simply that of supporting civil society members as much more work is being done in coordination with government, including local government. For example, the Premier's Office for the Eastern Cape awarded JDF funds to train civil society in neighbouring towns on local economic development (LED). Further, JDF monitors selected government projects with, for example, the Department of Agriculture and the Department of Social Development. Also, JDF has trained and organized the volunteers sitting on area committees (designed to facilitate citizen participation in local planning), including the representatives from various units that work with the Ikwezi municipality.

On the "shop floor," JDF now has a training centre and new activities are "more like a business." Financial support from a large bilateral donor has been used to set up a tele-centre which will provide a service to the community as well as generate an income stream for JDF. Also through a public – private partnership between the department of Social Development and Smart Byte, a small internet service provider based in Port Elizabeth, youth receive computer training. The idea is for them to train others and generate "business." While the future for JDF is unclear, a new role is currently being forged.

On top of the organizational development trajectory detailed above, different institutional roles and their interplay can be layered, deepening the story, and highlighting the significance of JDF as an intermediary organization.

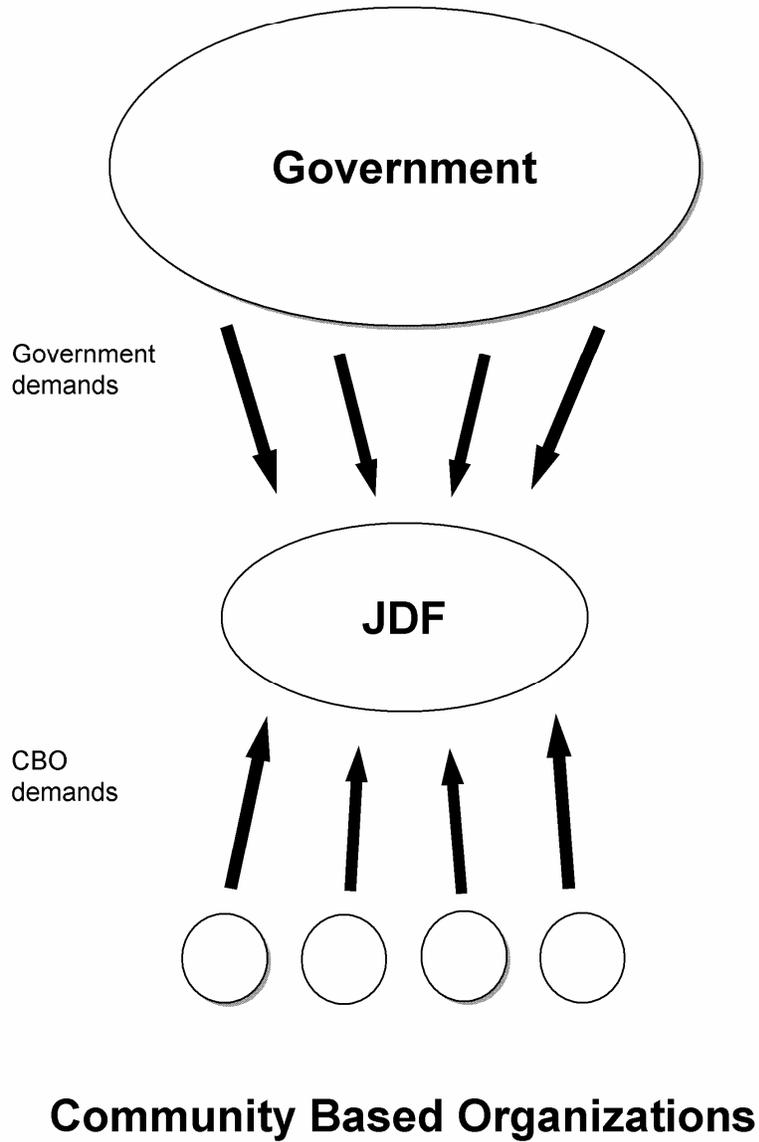
### *Institutional Interplay*

From an asset and agency perspective, opportunities were created by various associations and institutional players, including CBOs and government coming together for mutual benefit. The range of assets that each brings to the table is diverse – monetary and advisory assets, as well as contributions of volunteer time and goods in kind - and the ability to act expresses itself in many ways: at its most fundamental, CBOs came together under one representative structure. They also share a central office block or premises. Inter-institutional collaboration that facilitated resource flows – disbursements and access – among and across JDF, Ikhala Trust, and various arms of government. Through this inter-institutional engagement, opportunities are created to achieve a range of interests and mandates, and serve the mutually-beneficial interests of improving Jansenville.

Figure 1 illustrates the JDF intermediary experience and shows that within its institutional framework, JDF has to satisfy demands placed upon it, both from below, by the community, and from above, by government.

As the figure shows there was pressure for JDF to come into being, as local associations – a group of ten CBOs – had a need for organization, mobilization and strengthening. JDF's emergence as a higher level, or umbrella body, resolved these demands and incubated member capacity along with the ability to access resources. The CBOs are diverse, including groups for hospice care, early childhood education, provision of legal and rights-based advice, emerging farmers, and various income-generating initiatives. Some are more formalized than others, with some receiving external funds and others reaching into their own pockets, and relying on goods in kind and voluntary labour from members and the community.

Figure 1: JDF: An Intermediary Organization



There is also pressure from above. JDF's existence satisfies the government's need for scale as it requires larger and professional organizations through which to channel social service delivery. Also, the presence of JDF facilitates Ikwezi Municipal Council's mandate and

obligation to serve community in an engaged and responsive way, particularly in local planning decisions.

Notizi Vanda points out that there is a history of unsustainable local government projects and a tendency on the part of government officials to say, “here is the money – you organize.” However, she notes that JDF has contributed to reversing this and fostering a stronger relationship. It is significant to note that in 2006, the government, in an unprecedented move, decided to build new offices in Jansenville. This decision was informed by a concerted effort to service the community in a more effective and coordinated way. The new government complex, which will contain the Department of Social Development, the Department of Agriculture, and the Department of Public Works, is being constructed right next to JDF – on the same plot. The practice of government erecting new premises so close to the township community is unusual, if not exceptional, and speaks to a deliberate effort to establish an effective relationship between government and civil society.

In summary, JDF emerged in response to a civil society demand for organization and eventually found itself also satisfying the government’s need for scale and professionalism. This raises a key question. What does this duality mean for JDF? Two things stand out. First, it means that the Director, Notizi Vanda, has had to expand her role to bridge the gap between associations and institutions, and between citizen volunteers and local government. Notizi is a strong leader who wears many “hats.” When she says “we,” sometimes she is talking about her role as the coordinator for JDF, sometimes she is talking about her role as a part-time councillor on the Ikwezi Municipal Government Council, and sometimes she is talking about “we” in the sense of her membership of the community as a whole. Her multiple hats involve multiple accountabilities. Excerpts from an interview in Box 3 recount her personal story.

*Box 3: Notizi Vanda: An Inspiring Leader*

*Wearing Two Hats*

I am now a Councillor with responsibility for Infrastructure and Service Delivery in Ikwezi Municipal Government Council. I work part-time at this, paid by the municipality; so I spend the mornings at JDF and the afternoons at the municipal offices. My JDF income is now used for incentives for volunteers.

If you know the South African constitution now, [you will know that] it is very much in love with community participation, so it is easy [to play these two roles]. Whatever is happening at JDF is a joint program with the municipality. Also, our municipality is not well resourced [and] JDF has some resources that [the municipality doesn’t] have, so for me to do some of the things the government cannot...is easy because I am part of JDF.

*Taking up a Leadership Role in the Community*

I was born in Jansenville and trained as a teacher. After teaching outside Jansenville, I came back here in 1987 and taught maths and science. Then I took a leave of absence to become

a facilitator for the Quality Schools Project, developing materials for maths and science courses in the surrounding schools. But you know, in small places, if there is a phone and a fax people will all flock there. They don't care if [the office is for] education or health or whatever. So the corner that I was using ended up being a community corner, instead of focusing on schools. Then it went so far that people came from the income-generating activities and business, coming here for faxes and phone and all those things. That's why we came together as a community-based organization. I never went back to teaching because I began to see myself as a development worker.

*Leadership in the Post-Apartheid Period*

In 1995, things began to change. I was asked to stand as a candidate for mayor in the first local government elections. I was elected! I wasn't even trained in how local government operated. No one was. It was all so new. I couldn't take it! People were expecting miracles. So I resigned in 1996 and then started to study local government and how it operated. At that time the capacity of local government councillors was very low.

[So that is when I got back into community organizing work.] We came together as community-based organizations with different tasks and programs. Bernie [now the Director of Ikhala Trust] assisted us. We had the objective of sharing limited resources, gathering together for fund raising, guarding against duplication, and organizing civil society.

In 2001-2002 we were really struggling. I think I was the only one who wasn't really struggling because I had savings from when I was teaching. I was running JDF mostly on my own money, but with a small grant from Ikhala Trust. But we had a team and [members] understood the whole project. They hoped that down the line we would be funded one day. And eventually, after Ikhala Trust, came NDA.

Then last year I was approached again by the Province. There is a mandate for 50% representation by women on local government councils. So I agreed to become a councillor. So now I divide my time between JDF and local government, though of course there is a lot of overlap. As NGOs, as much as we are watchdogs of the government, we also want to assist on what government is unable to do because we are on the ground. Because of our small municipality and lack of manpower we are allowing ourselves to be of assistance.

Notizi Vanda is a striking figure and personality. Her story, her achievements, as well as the respect she visibly commands, confirms her credibility and authority as a leader. This ingredient is arguably a quintessential feature of JDF's achievements and success.

Second, JDF is member-based. It is "instructed" from below by the members and recognized by government. Members shape the agenda and decision-making processes of JDF, and also appear to be instrumental in Notizi's participation in local government. Bernie Dolley, Director of Ikhala recalls that:

She has declined this position (councillor) before, because she was trying to build JDF, but I think she got to the point where the community was

pressuring her to accept it. This is how it is and the community will hold you to account, so I never picked up that there is a problem [or conflict of interest]. (personal communication, 2007)

Attention is drawn to the reality that in a small community, resources including leadership, are scarce and will be mobilized and utilized to best advantage. The community sees Notizi Vanda as a valued and critical resource, and illustrates a determination to maximize this strength.

To conclude this appreciation from an asset and agency lens, the JDF model is one example of how an intermediary organization successfully used a community's "bonding capital" (i.e. the ties that hold a group together) to leverage bridging capital (extended asset provision and acquisition through linkages with organizations and networks beyond the community). That is, JDF strategically used what the community already had to access more.

#### *A Multi-directional Framework for Development Assets and Agency*

In 2003, development workers from a group of international foundations expressed their concern that foreign models of community grant-making assistance, including the community foundation model, were being introduced and used in Southern Africa with little consideration for what was already happening locally. The Ford Foundation took up this concern and funded the Building Community Philanthropy project at the Centre for Leadership and Public Values, Graduate School of Business at the University of Cape Town, to develop a systematic understanding of local norms and traditions of self-help and mutual assistance that exist in poor African communities. Research was conducted in four countries over a three-year period (2003-2005). The findings found in *The poor philanthropist: how and why the poor help each other* detail what people in poor communities consider to be help, the content of transactions, the actors involved, why people help each other, as well as what "rules" or codes of conduct they follow in a decision to help or not help (Wilkinson-Maposa, et al., 2005).

The research has made a significant contribution to how we can think about resource flows. It generated the concept of horizontal philanthropy or philanthropy of community (PoC). This idea tells us that resources move "side to side." It also points out that people who are poor are not only the recipients of development assistance, they also give to one another for self-help and mutual assistance. In this case, resources are "internal" to the community. In contrast, there is "vertical philanthropy," or "philanthropy for community," (PfC). In this case, resources flow "up to down" from the rich, or those of high net wealth, to the poor, or those of lesser financial means. Resources are external to the community being served. This is the case in development assistance and charity.

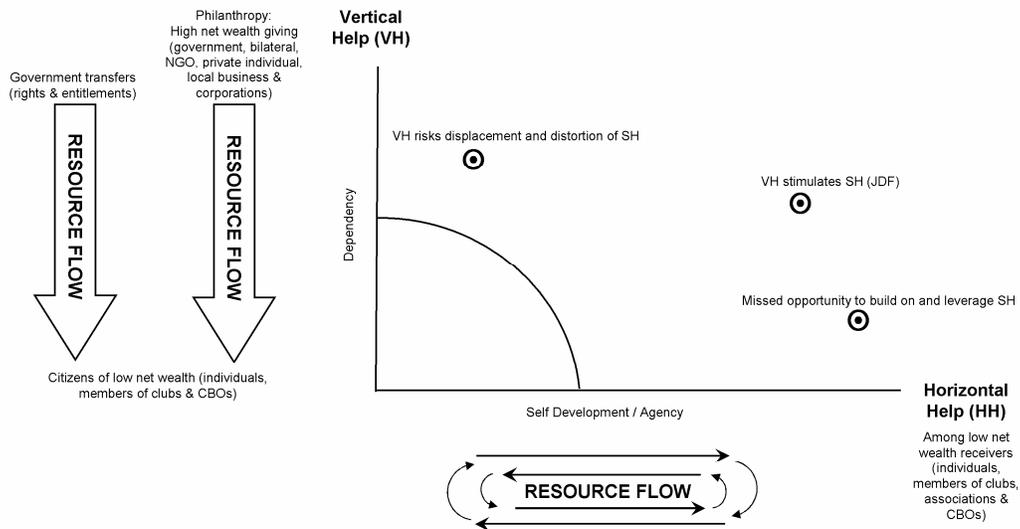
Figure 2 offers a framework to conceptualize the relationship between different sources of help. Horizontal help is on one axis and vertical help on the other. An arc is drawn between them. Each is briefly explained.

Aligned with horizontal help is the idea of responsibility for mutual self-help, based on relationships of reciprocal obligation and cooperation through which people draw on their

own agency: the ability to bring about change and create opportunities within a localized face-to-face context. Philosophically, mutual self-help is a melding together of giver and receiver as “co-determined bearers of humanity reflected in the [Ubuntu] axiom, ‘I am because we are’” (Wilkinson-Maposa, 2005, p. 101).

Aligned with vertical help is the resource flow from institutions and people of higher net wealth to those of lower net wealth: “help” motivated by charity, altruism, patronage or generosity and given by choice. In addition to these are resource flows from government through which wealth is redistributed, not as an act of charity, but as an expression of obligation to citizens, based on the notion of rights and entitlements. Resource flows arising out of entitlements of citizenship are therefore an expression of cooperation and “self-help” within the state, with the state mediating redistribution of wealth, but without expectations of reciprocity.

Figure 2: Multi-directional Framework



The arc connects vertical and horizontal help. This is done to illustrate that they do not act in isolation. Rather, they exist simultaneously. It is not a matter of choosing one or the other; they can co-exist.

Placing the arc onto this illustration also draws deliberate attention to the fact that very little is known about the horizontal and vertical interplay: that is, their relationship and effect on one another. An intervention or support placed at equal distance from the vertical and

horizontal axis illustrates that vertical help stimulates horizontal self-help and suggests that a balance has been achieved between “rights and responsibilities.” Placement left of centre, toward the vertical axis, would indicate a movement toward dependency, and placement right of centre toward the horizontal axis indicates unsustainable self-help and (or) limited growth and leverage of it.

In short, the arc, and the continuum of interplay that it represents, directs attention to how the introduction and use of external resources in a community impact on local asset mobilization and community agency. Do those resources support, distort, or strengthen agency? Do they increase or diminish community autonomy and agency; and do they decrease or increase dependency? Is the resource flow from government (a right) interpreted differently from the resource flow from philanthropic sources (a gesture of help), and as such, do they have different impacts on community autonomy and agency?

If applied to the case of Jansenville, JDF would be placed somewhere on the arc. This positioning would shed light on the potential and contribution of an intermediary organization to negotiate the space between external and internal resources and “set the rules” so that external resources do not “corrupt” or distort the community’s own asset base and weaken its autonomy.

As recounted earlier, in the case study at hand, JDF has been extremely instrumental in mediating the interplay between what the community can do for itself and what the state and external development assistance can do for it. JDF has built up the capacity of CBOs to engage with such agents. As well it has provided a bridge to facilitate and link community needs, rights, assets and agency with the policy mandates, services, and facilities that the state and development actors can provide. In exercising these roles, JDF has brought the community to the point of “movement” and has met its initial objective. However, as noted earlier, a reorientation is underway. JDF’s focus has begun to shift from social to economic development since employment and improved livelihoods are desperately needed in Jansenville. To remain relevant, JDF must recalibrate.

### *Conclusion*

JDF faces a looming irony. Two approaches – the intermediary approach mentioned above, in combination with a rights-based approach – have successfully linked the community to government funds and disbursement mechanisms. These approaches have skillfully walked the fine line of community entitlement and community empowerment. However, the conundrum these two forces present for dependency on external support still looms as Jansenville moves into the future. At risk is the expectation that government, business, and (or) the development community will create the process of economic and livelihood opportunities that is critically needed.

To traverse this terrain, it is likely that JDF will need to address a critical and challenging question: What is the right message to send regarding what the state or government can do for communities, what civil society can do, and what communities can do for themselves? Specifically, what is the balance and what does the strategy look like?

Practically, three key strategic considerations emerge for consideration to inform a framework for continued community mobilization and organization within an economic development and livelihoods agenda (Market Umbrella, 2000):

1. Expand local opportunities for micro and small enterprises: the potential for micro entrepreneurs to trade and hawk at the monthly flea market, currently dominated by non-resident business people, is an obvious and potential start.
2. Link micro and small business, the not-for-profit sector, and government support programs: the information technology project offering computer training to youth, operated from the JDF office and mentioned elsewhere, illustrates this approach, as does the emerging farmers' project on Hardwood farm. (This is a joint initiative of the Eastern Cape Department of Agriculture, Ikwezi Municipality, SAMIL, a mohair buyhouse and processing company, and Mohair South Africa. It consists of a training centre for emerging farmers interested in Angora goats and mohair production, offering instruction in all facets of management over a three-year period.)
3. In its intermediary role, JDF could facilitate a multi-layered and integrated approach with government and civil society to tackle the complex issue and tenuous terrain of a social grant system and viable livelihoods, including key elements of the rights and responsibilities question. The LED and the IDP process and various related financing mechanisms position this discussion.

Support to livelihood development in Jansenville will not be easy. Hurdles should not be underestimated. Economic opportunities are limited, yet not non-existent. The infrastructure for small and medium enterprises (SMEs) is also underdeveloped, although investments can be made and SMEs can benefit from the range of infrastructure projects already underway by government including a major road works initiative. Finally, people tend to seek jobs and wage employment or receive social assistance as their source of livelihood. Small enterprise is neither of these and requires a different mindset. As stated earlier, dependency on social grants remains high – at 65 to 70% – and the entrepreneurship ranking in South Africa is steadily decreasing. The magnitude of this shift cannot be underemphasized. A shift from the deficit mindset of dependence on social grants and the enterprising nature and confidence needed for business ownership would represent a significant leap.

#### *Past Achievements Can Craft Future Success*

JDF has been a key player in social development in Jansenville and has the potential to continue its intermediary role in the promotion of local economic development and more sustainable livelihoods. In making this transition, its leadership, incubation model and asset-based approach are strengths to draw upon in the steep climb toward local economic development. Strategic shifts, however, will be required. For example, JDF's commitment to asset-based social development could give way to asset-based economic development. That is, instead of focusing on building up CBO capacity to access and attract external dollars to the community, an asset-based economic development activity would set out to create an asset that will, over time, generate many incomes (Market Umbrella, 2000). Furthermore, JDF's incubation of CBO capacity to access services would make way for the incubation of

micro-enterprise businesses within the community to create and benefit from economic opportunities.

In summary, the Jansenville community and JDF have many challenges ahead of them, but also many achievements and successes behind them. As they continue to “move,” they do so from a solid foundation: one of pride and hope, as well as respect and trust from external actors. Both are arguably fundamental to drive sustainable community-driven development.

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## **List of Acronyms**

|       |  |
|-------|--|
| ANC   | African National Congress  |
| CBO   | Community Based Organization   |
| CGSI  | Community Grantmaking & Social Investment Programme                              |
| GEM   | Global Entrepreneurship Monitor  |
| GNP   | Gross National Product   |
| IDP   | Integrated Development Plan  |
| JDF   | Jansenville Development Forum  |
| LED   | Local Economic Development   |
| NDA   | National Development Agency  |
| NGO   | Non Governmental Organization  |
| NPO   | Not for Profit Organization  |
| PfC   | Philanthropy for Community   |
| PoC   | Philanthropy of Community  |
| SCAPE | Strengthening Capacities for Transforming Relationships<br>and Exercising Rights |
| SME   | Small and Medium Enterprises   |

### Author's Note

In exploring potential communities for this collection of case studies, the Coady Institute was keen to include a case that offered insights for donor or philanthropic organizations. At the CIVICUS conference in Glasgow in June 2006, Dr. Alan Fowler drew Alison Mathie's attention to a research monograph that he and I authored, entitled *The Poor Philanthropist: How and Why the Poor Help Each Other*. As a "pull-out" to highlight, Alison identified the idea that poor communities do not just receive development assistance but also give, by mobilizing their own resources internally to address need within the community.

I was then approached to identify a South African case study. I turned to my colleague Bernie Dolley, Director of Ikhala Trust, a community grantmakers in the Eastern Cape for advice. She immediately proposed JDF, an Ikhala grantee that she has worked with since its inception. Coincidentally, the Coady Institute had previously explored working with Fort Hare University in the Eastern Cape and knew of Bernie through her involvement in the East Coast NGO Association (ECNGOC).

JDF was selected because it had made unique and impressive achievements in community mobilization in order to access government services and other grantmakers. JDF's members were ready to tell others about this. But more than this, JDF was also at a turning point. Its members wanted to reflect on where they had come from, what they had accomplished, and where they were heading. The opportunity to recount their story came at just the right time. As well, we thought the case could serve as an inspiration to others. The Jansenville community has been able to accomplish something that many other communities in South Africa are struggling to do with varying degrees of success – that is, work effectively with local government to access assets, including rights and entitlements of the community.

Within a few short months the research team (Susan Wilkinson-Maposa, Alison Mathie, Brie MacMahon) was addressing a meeting convened by JDF's director and founder Notizi Vanda. Over 30 people attended. This turnout of civil society and government representatives was unprecedented. Even the ANC Member of Parliament, Judy Chalmers, attended. Over the next week, we interviewed upwards of seven key informants, visited at least ten site visits including community based organizations and government projects as well as institutions (municipal offices, the police and the local hospital). We also sat down and heard the chronology of events from JDF's inception to date, as told from the perspective of Notizi Vanda and Bernie Dolley, an external advisor. Board members of Ikhala Trust were also interviewed for a fuller understanding of the principles guiding their work.

Conducting this case study was a privileged experience. The research process was more than a retrospective recollection and account of the past. For Notizi and Bernie in particular, it was an opportunity to engage with the past in order to reflect on, inform and craft a future vision and direction for JDF. It was exciting to be part of their thoughtful journey.

The chance to contribute this chapter has afforded me a valued opportunity to shed a point of light on local norms and traditions of self help, as a distinctive dimension of community assets and agency that deserves to be recognized and appreciated in community development theory and practice.